

# crossroads

MSSU Alumni Publication Fall 2010

## Dream reality

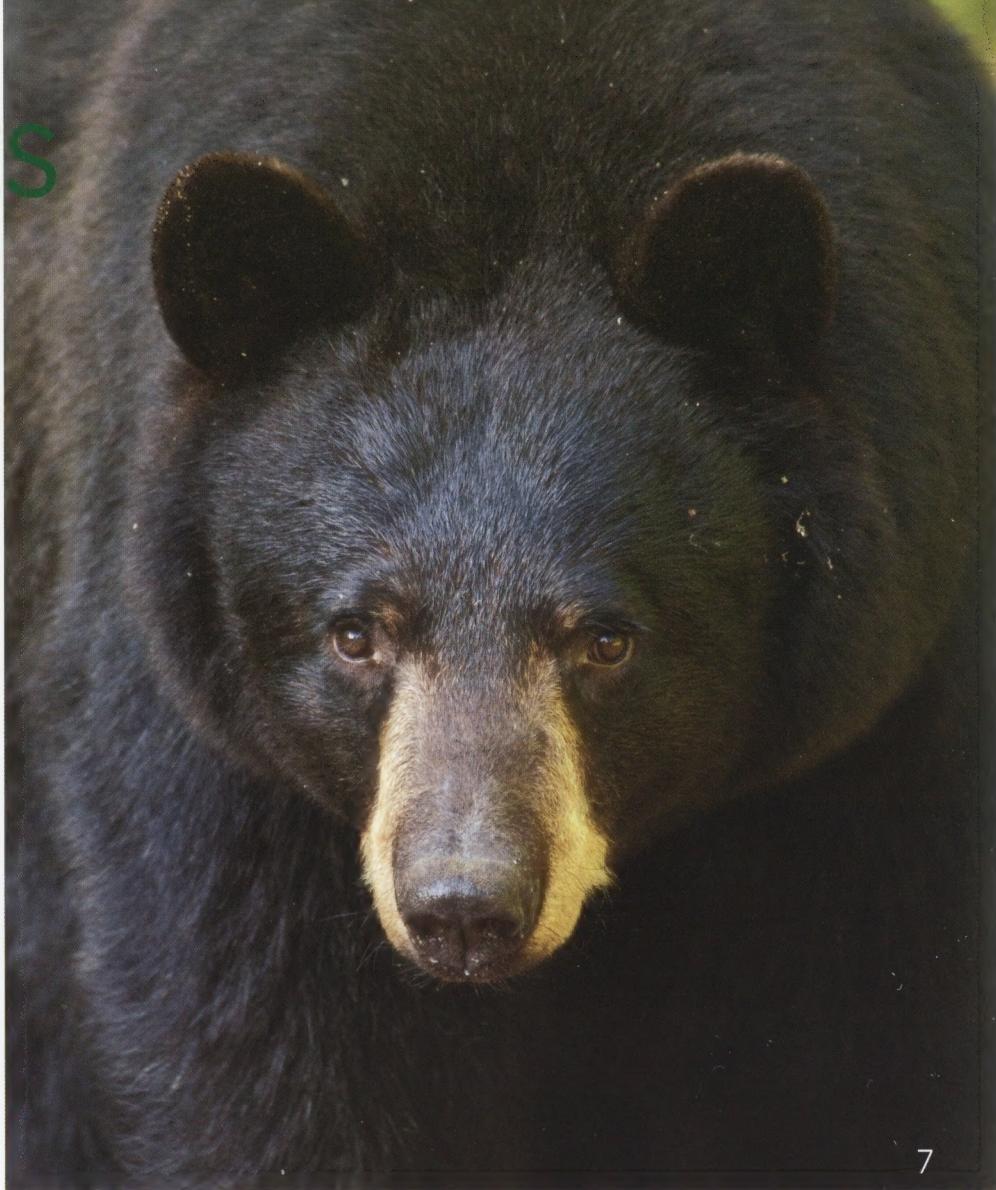
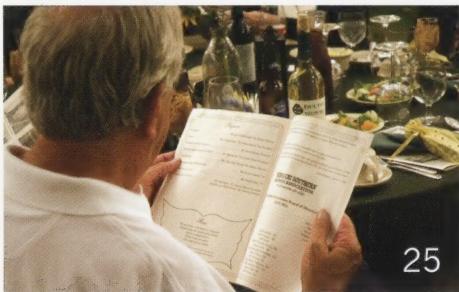
Vision complete,  
the Ralph L. Gray  
Alumni Center  
welcomes visitors.

RALPH L. GRAY  
ALUMNI CENTER

## Plus...

Homecoming '10   Alumni Features   Lion Sports   And more!

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*The Dennis Weaver Memorial Fountain welcomes visitors to the Ralph L. Gray Alumni Center. Photo by Mike Gullett; photo illustration by Andrew Pavlovic, '11.*

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**STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

**crossroads** magazine is the official alumni publication of the Missouri Southern State University Alumni Association. The mission is to serve its readers by providing information of interest about the University, its alumni and the Alumni Association and by acting as a channel for Missouri Southern alumni as a "connection for life" with the University.

**crossroads** magazine is published two times a year by the Missouri Southern State University Alumni Association and the Department of Communication. It is mailed to current MSSU Alumni Association members and friends of the University. A select number of copies are distributed on campus each semester.

**crossroads** is written and designed by faculty, staff, students and alumni. The views expressed do not represent the student body, faculty, staff, administration or Missouri Southern State University.

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Hello and thank you MSSU Alumni!

This column comes to you at the most exciting time we've had at the Alumni Association. We are now officially "home" in the Ralph L. Gray Alumni Center, and we couldn't be happier. This issue will show you photos of our grand opening with donors and provide you with a story of "Our Journey" to get to this point. We begin a new journey of continued thanks for your help.

We have been amazed at the number of visitors to the Alumni Center. By December 1, we had received more than 1,500 visitors. The freshman University Experience classes visit the Alumni Center and learn the history of Joplin Junior College growing into a university.

Daily, we have visitors come to visit and see the beautiful restoration, view an autographed professional football or basketball jersey of one of our alums, or the beautiful alumni artwork.

We know how very lucky we are to have such a beautiful and historic place to call our home. And, we know how very lucky we are to have so many alumni and friends who have provided money, service, in-kind gifts and their time. We can never thank you enough, but please come by often and we will certainly try!

In Lion Pride,

Lee Elliff Pound, '86  
Alumni Director



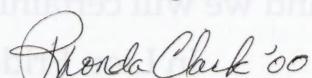
Hope you enjoy this issue of **crossroads**. Once again, our students have done an outstanding job of writing, photographing and designing. Without their input, this project would be a very boring task.

Our first online issue went live on June 7, 2010, with the spring magazine. Since the upload, we have recorded more than 2,500 hits as of December 1. Wow! The response to the magazine has been tremendous on campus and from individuals who receive it in the mail, but it's nice to see us attracting Web fans. Not only are people reading us online, but they are spreading the word through Facebook, e-mail and other social links. Some have even embedded the magazine to a website.

You can check us out online by going to the website at [www.issuu.com/crossroadsmssu/docs/crspring10](http://www.issuu.com/crossroadsmssu/docs/crspring10). Once on the site, you will be able to flip through the pages, zoom into important content or click on an external link that tells you "the rest of the story." Our fall issue will be online soon, as well. Go to [www.issuu.com/crossroadsmssu/docs/crfall10](http://www.issuu.com/crossroadsmssu/docs/crfall10) and experience the interactivity of the Internet. Feel free to share us with your friends, colleagues and families.

Thanks again for encouraging us with each issue.

Warm regards,



Rhonda Clark, '00,  
**crossroads** Editor,  
Assistant Professor, Communication

### crossroads

Fall 2010  
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Keep in touch with events, chat with college friends, network for possible jobs, or find alumni in your area. To join our page, type Missouri Southern Alumni Association in the search field at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com).



# Philanthropy enhances our quality

**N**ow that a year has passed since my arrival at Missouri Southern, I continue to be amazed at the great opportunities that exist for growth in our development program. In the last issue, we introduced our new development officers, JoAnn Graffam, '87, and Michael Fontana, who have both hit the ground running and are doing wonderful work in raising friends and funds for Southern.

Clearly, we have a great challenge in front of us to grow the development programs and to assist donors in accomplishing their charitable goals and objectives. However, if we are successful, private philanthropy can have a major impact on the quality of the education



experience for Southern students today and tomorrow.

In this issue, Michael Fontana, our development officer for annual and scholarship giving, shares our vision of the importance of the Southern Annual Fund to the growth and success of philanthropy here at Southern. I strongly believe that our reinvigorated annual fund program will be the cornerstone upon which we build a more comprehensive development effort at Southern.

I am thankful to Michael for undertaking this important task, and I urge all that count MSSU as a meaningful part of their life experience to participate in this exciting new opportunity!

— Dr. Mark Parsons, Vice President for Development and Executive Director, Missouri Southern Foundation

## Southern Annual Fund encourages giving back to become a year-round thought for benefactors

**O**ur alumni and friends, our faculty and staff, have all historically contributed to continue the growth and improvement of Missouri Southern



State University. For this we say thank you. Without your support, we would not have been able to achieve all that we have today, or all that we will in the future.

One way we will succeed in the future is through development of the Southern Annual Fund.

While encompassing the annual Phonathon, the Southern Annual Fund will go further to increase support for the university while ensuring that our donors are properly thanked and regularly kept informed of the successes occurring every day at Southern.

Unlike the Phonathon, the Southern Annual Fund will be a year-round effort to raise support to provide for university needs, such as scholarships, departmental support, equipment, facilities and

others. This first year of the Southern Annual Fund, we expect to raise more than \$70,000.

Alumni and friends will continue to receive calls from Missouri Southern students, who will update you on successes at the university. We hope you will update them on successes and changes in your life. In addition, we will send out direct mails and e-mails to offer thanks and provide further information about Southern.

Key to all of this is to help keep our supporters connected with the university. We appreciate all levels of support, from the highest to the humblest. The important piece is we are able to say that more and more alumni and friends have chosen to make a commitment to Missouri Southern.

With your commitment, Missouri Southern is stronger.

We are proud of Southern today. Please help us continue building that pride for future Lions.

— Michael Fontana, Development Officer  
for Annual and Scholarship Giving

# Take pride in our future:

Pride in our students  
Pride in our faculty  
Pride in our facilities  
Pride in our community



*“ I take pride in the degree that I earned from Missouri Southern. Education is a tool that has equipped me and my family for success. I believe it is important to help future students attend MSSU as well. That is why I give to the Southern Annual Fund every year. ”*

Michael Kelly, '76  
CPA, Kelly & Compton



Southern Annual Fund

For more information, contact the Missouri Southern Foundation:  
Michael Fontana, Development Officer, 417-659-4436, Hearnes Hall, Room 211,  
3950 E. Newman Road, Joplin, MO 64801-1595, [www.mssu.edu/foundation](http://www.mssu.edu/foundation)

# Board guides international mission

Missouri Southern Athletics has the Lionbacker Booster Club, the George A. Spiva Library has the Friends of the Library, and the Alumni Association has a board of directors. Now, the Institute of International Studies has an International Mission Advisory Board.



At least 20 such advisory boards are on campus, including ones for biology, communication, environmental health, marketing, dental hygiene, law enforcement, nursing and radiology. Nearly all meet bi-annually or annually.

The International Mission Advisory Board was established in May 2010 to assist in "the care and feeding" of MSSU's international mission. Richard Walter, '79, a member of the MSSU Board of Governors, was asked to serve as the board's chair, and he graciously agreed to give even more of his time to the university.

Although we originally intended to hold quarterly meetings, the IMAB met monthly May through September in order to get up to speed on all the international programs and activities on

campus. Faculty members who had led short-term study abroad trips gave reports, as did the international student adviser and the coordinator of international admissions. We spent a considerable amount of time discussing ways for sustaining MSSU's Spanish Village with director Leslie Parker.

Fundraising for the international mission also was a common thread of most meetings. The board debated whether to start a modest campaign — \$25,000 or \$50,000 — or something more substantial. Board members agreed it was essential to tell potential donors why MSSU needed the funds and to prioritize all the international functions on campus.

The IMAB is still grappling with such issues as how often to meet, the length of terms of board members, whether to have co-chairs or a chair-elect, and ways to advance the international mission. The board's primary purpose, though, is to support the Institute of International Studies and its endeavors both on campus and in the community.

— Dr. Chad Stebbins, '82  
Director, Institute of International Studies

## International Mission Advisory Board



Richard Walter, '79



Nancy Perry, '88



Jack Crusa, '78



J. Alan Brady, '99



Richard Massa



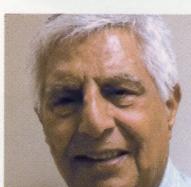
Donna Davis Browne



John Cragin



Jere Marcum, '69



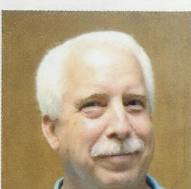
Fannun Kanan



Dot Willcoxon



Randy Stanley, '73



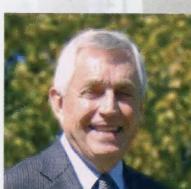
John Patrick



Dr. Stephen Smith



Dr. William Kumbier



Dr. AJ Anglin

Dr. Chad Stebbins and Dr. AJ Anglin, vice president for academic affairs, serve as ex-officio members of the board. For information about members of the International Mission Advisory Board, go online to [www.mssu.edu/international](http://www.mssu.edu/international).

# OUT OF THE WILD

Passion lures graduate toward nature photography.



In 2009, photographer Noppadol Paothong, '01, works an assignment in Gunnison, Colorado.



**B**looming flowers, soaring eagles and fog-covered mountains are only a few of the images captured by Noppadol Paothong, '01. As a wildlife photographer, a typical day begins well before dawn, when animals are most active.

He often wakes at 1 a.m. and sets off on an early morning drive to one of his favorite locations. After setting up his equipment, he has only to wait. Even in the bitter cold or blistering heat, he waits patiently.

Paothong, a staff photographer for the Missouri Department of Conservation, shoots most of his photographs in Missouri. His work is used in the department's publications, including its monthly magazine, *Missouri Conservationist*.

Paothong has also worked as a photojournalist for the *Joplin Globe* and the *Springfield News-Leader*. While working for the latter, Paothong heard about an opening at the Missouri Department of Conservation and knew it was for him.

"Although I'd been working as a photojournalist, I always knew that my heart was with wildlife photography. So, when I saw that opening, I knew that it was what I wanted to do for the rest of my life," Paothong said. "I can still say that it is a dream job for me, and I love what I do."

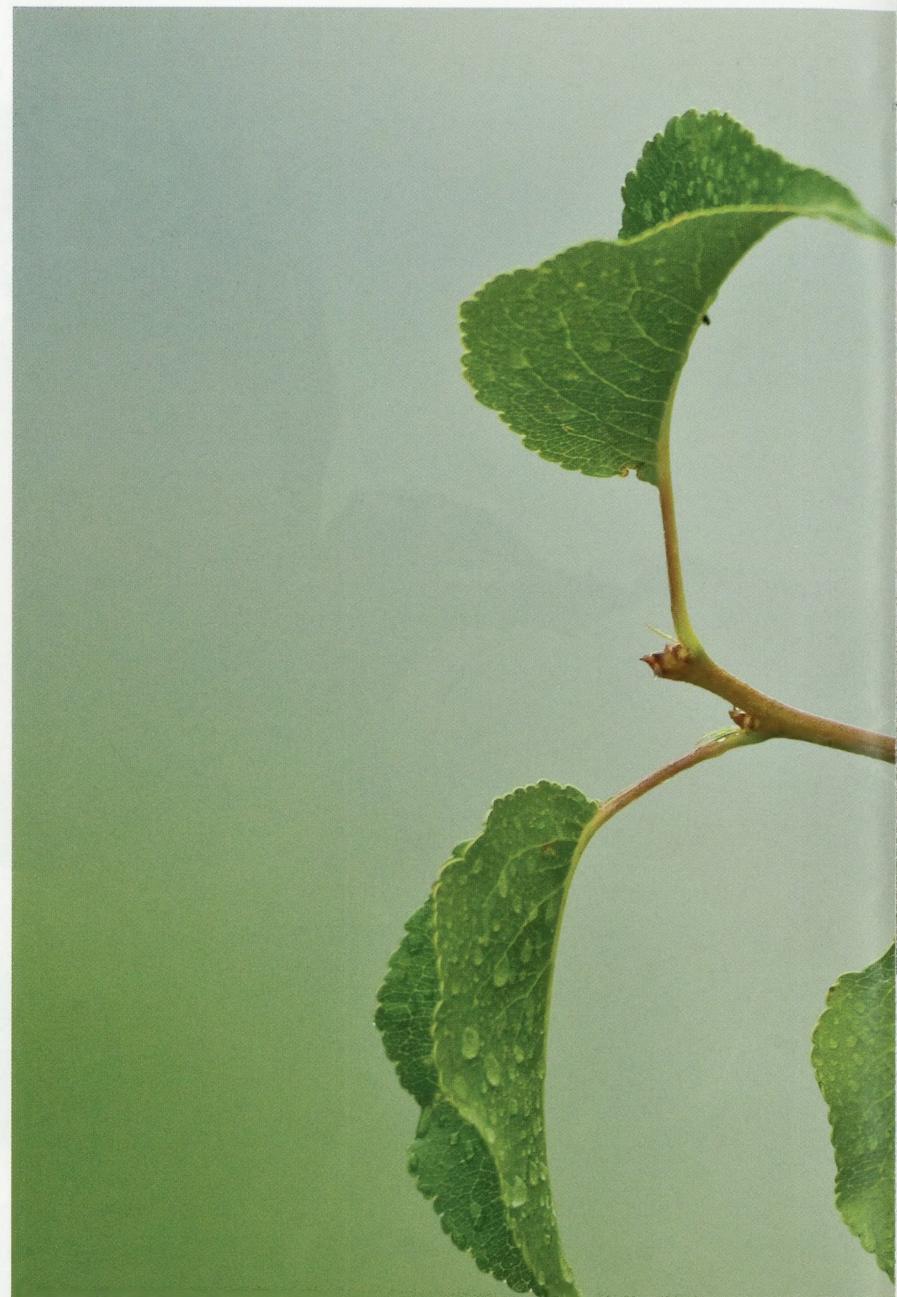
Paothong pursued his love of photography as a student photo editor for *The Chart* at Missouri Southern. His most memorable assignment was to cover a hurricane story in Central America. Along with two other reporters, Paothong visited the region for two weeks, traveling through Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Honduras.

"We visited a hurricane refugee camp in Nicaragua. It was the most humble and touching experience I've had in my journalism career," Paothong said. "The picture I took there, of a mother holding a baby after three days without anything to feed her baby, still makes me sad."

Dr. Chad Stebbins, '82, who was adviser to *The Chart* when Paothong was a student, recruited the aspiring photographer.

"Nop was probably the best college photographer in the country, and we were fortunate enough to lure him to Missouri Southern after he had spent three years at a community college in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho," Stebbins said. "People still marvel at some of the pictures he took for *The Chart*."

Though his career as a photographer didn't begin



*In 2009, a male painted bunting perches on a branch during a summer rain shower in Jefferson City, Missouri. Two of Noppadol Paothong's photos decorate the fountain room of the Ralph L. Gray Alumni Center at Missouri Southern.*



until college, Paothong had an interest in photography before he was 10 years old.

"I thought a camera was very fascinating, and I really liked that aspect of photography where I could capture a moment into film," he said. "I also liked art, so photography came very naturally as a way to express myself. It did take some time to realize that my interest in photography could be a career."

And, Paothong's future career path continues to show promise.

"Nop may very well be the top nature

photographer in the United States," said Stebbins, who is now the director of the Institute of International Studies. "I suspect that he'll end up working for *National Geographic* some day. We're very proud that he was able to hone his skills at MSSU and that we can call him an alumnus of our university."

With his photos, Paothong hopes to inspire people to care about nature and wildlife.

In particular, he has been documenting endangered prairie chickens and other

*"I always knew that my heart was with wildlife photography. So when I saw that opening, I knew that it was what I wanted to do for the rest of my life."*

---

Noppadol Paothong, '01

*Missouri Southern State University alumnus and nature photographer*



North American grouses for more than eight years, in the hope of bringing them to the public's attention.

"I also like to inspire young people," he said.

"Some people come to me and say that because of my photos, their kids are interested in nature or outdoor photography. It means a lot to me."

As an individual who has followed his passion, Paothong advises others to do the same.

"Whatever you do, put your heart into it. It shows," he said. 

— Becky Husky, '10

## NOPPADOL PAOTHONG

### Professional

Missouri Department of

Conservation, 2006 to present  
*Springfield News-Leader*, 2005-06  
*Joplin Globe*, 1998-2004.

Also freelances for many national  
magazines

### Education

Bachelor of arts in communications,  
Missouri Southern, 2001

### Personal

He and his wife, Monica, live in Columbia, Missouri, and have a daughter, Eva, who was born in March 2010. See a story about Eva's amazing delivery at [www.boone.org/bhc/cms/1/info/pdf/BT0510.pdf](http://www.boone.org/bhc/cms/1/info/pdf/BT0510.pdf).

### In the works

A book that has been eight years in the making on the Great Plains grouse. Paothong is working with two writers, as well as a designer, illustrator, photo editor and text editor for the piece. Sponsors are also underwriting the project.

Photos from top: On a fall morning in 2009, fog begins to lift in a view from a fire tower in the Coot Mountain area near Eminence, Missouri. A male prairie chicken booms late in the evening in 2004 at Golden Prairie near Golden City, Missouri. Last January, a river otter stretches in the cold wintry water of the Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area near Columbia.

# New horizons

## VP discovers perfect fit at Southern.



Dr. AJ Anglin, vice president for academic affairs

— Photo by Andrew Pavovic '11

**T**he young college student was perplexed after his chemistry instructor made a proclamation. "You know, you are going to be in the cathedral choir," she told him. "Well, I'm not. I can't sing," the student replied. "You do understand," the instructor emphasized, "you *are* going to be in the cathedral choir."

The young chemistry major did sing in cathedral choir — for four years. Standing between two vocally gifted students to prevent him from singing off-key, he never missed a choir practice. In fact, during his time in choir, he received one music award — for perfect attendance. What he learned from that experience benefited him far more than perfecting his singing voice.

"I expanded my horizon. And that's what we need to teach young people," said Dr. AJ Anglin, Missouri Southern's new vice president for academic affairs. "Don't be afraid to expand your horizon. The criteria isn't, 'Are you going to be good at it?' It's, 'Will you expand your horizon?'"

Anglin, who began his new assignment at Southern in June 2010, said it was his chemistry professor who inspired him to begin a career in higher education. He loves working in higher education and regards it as the most fulfilling career imaginable.

In 2008, Anglin retired from his position as vice president for academic affairs at Waynesburg (Pennsylvania) University, but he had a feeling he would return to the workforce.

"I'm more surprised that I didn't get back to work sooner," Anglin said.

His short retirement offered a chance to catch up on traveling and visiting family, but within 18 months, he was ready for something more. When he began his search for a new position, he

liked what he saw at Southern.

"The faculty like working with each other. They like what this institution is about," Anglin said.

Darren Fullerton, '88, interim vice president for student affairs and member of the search committee, said the committee was looking for individuals who were well-respected by faculty of their previous institutions, experienced in developing and maintaining programs, and involved with the community and fundraising.

"We thought Dr. Anglin hit all of those criteria and had experience in each of those areas," said Fullerton.

Anglin has years of administrative experience, but Southern is the first state institution he has worked for, as his previous assignments were at private universities. Fullerton said Anglin's experience in private schools and fundraising is beneficial.

"We are in a situation where our state funding is decreasing every year," Fullerton said. "Being from a private school, they are much more centered on customer service and on fundraising and on those types of things, and that's where I think we're headed."

The lessons Anglin learned from his own college experience spurred his success in academics, earning him a high grade-point average along with a doctorate in physical chemistry from the University of Arkansas.

Lifelong skills, said Anglin, are something students can take away from higher education and trying new things is one value he would like to see others pass on.

"Life has so many opportunities and things for you to explore," he said. "Don't ask the question whether you're good at it. Just explore it."

— Emily Seigel, '11

# English, philosophy on the move

The life cycle of a university frequently produces changes that largely go unnoticed by most students. New faculty and staff appointments, retirements and deaths may



not cross students' radar during their academic career. Less dramatic changes may result when a faculty or staff member relocates from one office space to another without any fanfare.

But this year, MSSU is witnessing one transition that alters its history — the relocation of the English and philosophy department.

Almost every student who has matriculated through Southern has visited the third floor of Hearnes Hall to meet with a faculty member from English or philosophy or to take a course. Since the university's creation in 1967, English has been housed in the corner suite of offices on the third floor of Hearnes. Names like Zucker, Lambert, Spector, Morgan, Couch, Saltzman and Marlowe resonate in the walls of the third floor. In fact, the earliest history of MSSU reflects the impact of faculty members from this department. Cletis Headlee, a faculty member when Southern was known as Joplin Junior College, accompanied the institution as it became a college. Ms. Headlee would later become the first female department head at Missouri Southern. Bernard McCormick was the epitome of the college professor, always dressed in a suit, wearing a black hat and usually carrying a briefcase. He came to southwest

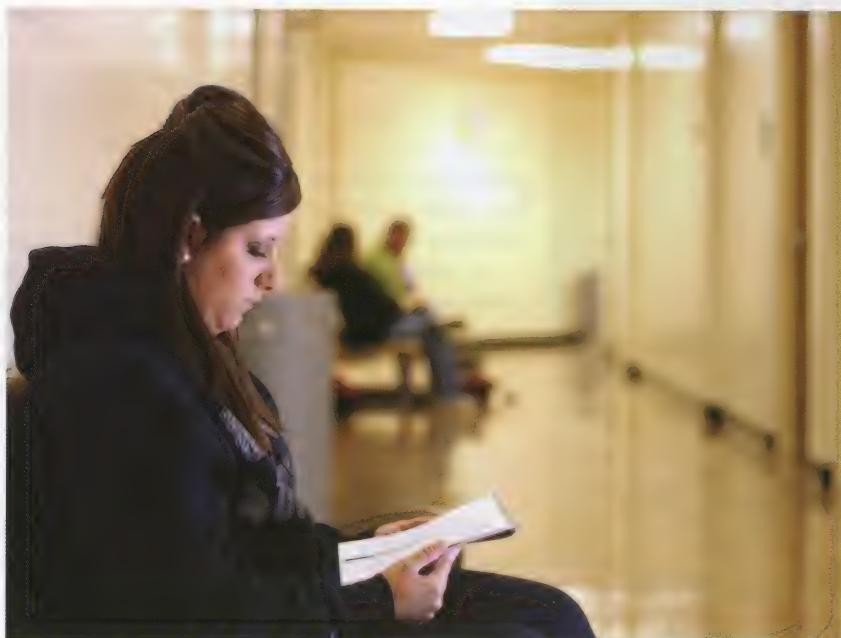
Missouri with a degree from Notre Dame and earned immediate credibility and respect from the administration and his colleagues; his teaching earned him credibility with the students. Mr. McCormick became the father of the philosophy component in the department by offering the first course in that discipline. Grace Mitchell, like Ms. Headlee, was a member of the junior college faculty. In 1983, she became one of the two first recipients of the Outstanding Teacher Award. When the university decided to name the residence halls, it quickly chose to name three of the buildings after these faculty members in recognition of their contributions to MSSU.

During the summer of 2010, Kuhn Hall, the former home of the nursing department, and the Kuhn Hall Annex (formerly called the Foundation House) were remodeled for the English and philosophy department. In August, the department, for the first time in its existence, took possession of a building that will be populated strictly for its use.

The new location has allowed the department to establish a reading area for its majors, upgrade classroom technology, and give faculty more professional office space.

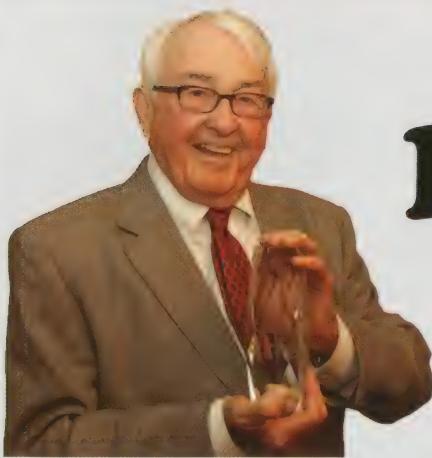
After 43 years, a new chapter is beginning for the English and philosophy department. I would invite, and encourage, former and new students to stop by and visit the faculty; they haven't moved on, just moved.

— Dr. Richard Miller, Dean  
School of Arts and Sciences



*Jordan Cantrell, elementary education major, reads the fairy tale Rupunzel for a children's literature class during a break in October in Kuhn Hall. The English and philosophy department recently moved this past year from Hearnes Hall. In the spring, the former Foundation House will be used as an annex for students and faculty.*

— Curtis Almeter



# Beauuutiful!

## Southern Regional Media Hall of Fame inducts alumnus Bill Grigsby, Voice of the KC Chiefs.

**H**umorous anecdotes and an occasional melody punctuated the acceptance speech as the Joplin native humbly received his award last spring.

"It's a beautiful thing to let me come home, and this is really, truly home, and see my friends, have fun and laugh with all of you," said Bill Grigsby, 1948 Joplin Junior College alumnus and new member of the Missouri Southern Regional Media Hall of Fame.

The Voice of the Kansas City Chiefs for 46 years, Grigsby accepted the award on April 13 at the annual banquet sponsored by the Missouri Southern Department of Communication. The award recognizes journalists who have had a significant impact on the four-state region surrounding Joplin.

"Bill Grigsby is a Kansas City icon, and one of the most recognizable figures in this part of the country," said Dr. Chad Stebbins, '82, professor of communication and director of the Institute of International Studies, who was on the selection committee. "He has broadcast the Final Four, the Kansas Jayhawks and the Missouri Tigers, the Kansas City Athletics, and the Kansas City Chiefs. To think that he got his start right here in Joplin, at WMBH radio and the *Joplin Globe*, is an inspiration to our students."

Grigsby was a nontraditional student when he attended Joplin Junior College. The returning World War II veteran met his future wife, Fran, while a student, and the relationship blossomed into a 60-year marriage that included five children.

"Whatever success I have is due to her,"

Grigsby said of his wife. "She let me alone, and she'll have a pipeline straight to heaven when she dies."

Grigsby left college and wrote obituaries at the *Joplin Globe* before he joined WMBH. He began his sports career broadcasting the Joplin Miners baseball team and its then young star, Mickey Mantle. Wanting to further his career, Grigsby moved his family to Kansas City to cover Athletics baseball in the 1950s.

After an ethical disagreement with the A's owner at the time, Charles O. Finley, Grigsby voted with his conviction and resigned in 1961.

"I quit and I had nothing. Nothing," he recalled.

The resilient Grigsby entered into a beer distributorship business and freelanced, covering college sports.

When a young Texan moved his team to Kansas City, Grigsby landed a spot on the Chiefs radio desk. From 1963-2009, Grigsby and his signature "Beauuutiful!" filled the airwaves of Chiefs Radio. Grigsby broadcast two Super Bowls, including the inaugural game in 1967.

Grigsby and his wife remain active with philanthropy work in their community, but he refuses to classify himself as "retired."

"I don't believe in that word retire, because when you retire, 'the party's over,'" Grigsby said as he drifted off into a melody. "I don't retire. I retired from football, because as you get older, they start relegating you to different tasks, and I was out doing interviews on the parking lot. And the next thing you know, I'd be out parking cars."

Stebbins gave Grigsby a tour of the Southern campus while he was in Joplin.

"You have a great university, a great university. I was a part of this 60 years ago, and it's blossomed beautifully," said Grigsby, who was also the MSSU Outstanding Alumnus in 1984.

Some attendees purchased signed copies of his autobiography "Grigs! It's a Beauuutiful Life" after the luncheon. Grigsby looked up as he was about to sign a book.

"Are you a student?" he asked. "Yes," was her reply. "Well, this one's on me," Grigsby said.

Then, with a gentlemanly gesture, Grigsby kissed the student's hand as he gave her the book.

This gracious charm shown through Grigsby's humor at the banquet, and he was grateful to be a hall of fame inductee.

"It means a lot to be loved and considered a friend of the university," he said. **C**

— Rhonda Clark, '00



Bill Grigsby and his wife, Fran, visit with family and friends last April at the Regional Media Hall of Fame banquet. — Photos by Andrew Pavlovic, '11

### MEDIA HALL OF FAME

**2010:** Bill Grigsby, nationally known sports broadcaster, who worked for 46 years with the Kansas City Chiefs

**2009:** Dave Berry, vice president of Community Publishers Inc.; Danny Thomas, president and general manager of KOAM-TV in Joplin, Missouri.

**2007:** Ron Petersen, owner of KXML-FM and KDMO-AM in Carthage, Missouri; Wendell Redden, sports editor for the *Joplin Globe* from 1952-96.

**2007:** Bob Phillips started in broadcast radio in 1943, and transitioned to TV at KODE-TV in Joplin; Bob James broadcast more than 40 years in the Joplin-area, the majority as a radio newsman.

# New building adds welcome space

The new Health Sciences Building made a major impact on many programs across campus. This impact has certainly been felt in the school of education. The school's



psychology department has seen the most change due to this new facility. Before the start of the 2010-11 school year, psychology moved its departmental and faculty offices and classrooms to the Health Sciences Building. New to the department is the ability to have observation areas. Incorporated into the design is one observation room, from which faculty and students can observe into the human lab "suite" of five lab rooms. One can observe any of the other rooms unobtrusively (through one-way glass) from the observation room.

Another significant addition is the new animal research facility. This facility has afforded psychology students and faculty the opportunity to investigate the principles governing animal learning and memory processes. This has significantly broadened the existing options students have regarding their selection of a senior thesis topic and has served a key role in the demonstration of both classical and operant conditioning concepts in the applied behaviorism, conditioning & learning, and animal behavior courses. Collaborative multidiscipline research projects have also been planned involving faculty members from the psychology and education departments.

Although the kinesiology department faculty did not move offices to the Health Sciences Building, the department is excited about its designated space. Several of the space issues and challenges that have existed in Young Gymnasium and Leggett & Platt Athletic Center

(kinesiology and athletics sharing space) have been minimized with the addition of the rooms in the new building, which houses an assessment lab. This lab features state-of-the-art instruments and equipment, including the Microfit Fitness Assessment System and a medical treadmill for Max VO<sub>2</sub> tests of cardiovascular endurance. The health resource center provides students and faculty with hands-on health education products. Also connected with the department of kinesiology is the exercise room, which provides students space for dance and exercise classes as well as an area to perform additional fitness testing.

The Health Sciences Building opened at the perfect time for the school of education. Over the years, the heavy use of Young Gymnasium and Leggett & Platt Athletic Center for classes and athletics has made it difficult to meet the educational needs of our students. The space in the Health Sciences Building for kinesiology was, clearly, a welcome addition. Even though the department of teacher education did not directly benefit from the new construction, the domino effect is evident. With the department of teacher education facing the largest enrollment numbers ever, classrooms were at a premium. The department of psychology's move from Taylor Hall freed up classrooms for teacher education. Kinesiology and teacher education classes have been held in classrooms across campus in the past and are now able to be held in our own buildings.

School of education faculty feel extremely fortunate to have been included in the planning, the move, and the new space, directly and indirectly, resulting from the construction of the Health Sciences Building. Although usage of space in the new building varies from department to department, the benefits have been truly significant.

— Dr. Glenn Coltharp, Dean, School of Education

*Shari Kline, senior psychology major, observes her fellow psychology students, senior Katy Harrall (left) and junior Kristine Rupe, as they demonstrate the "human lab" suite in the new Health Sciences Building. The lab includes five suites to help researchers observe human behavior through sets of one-way glass.*

— Photo by Andrew Pavlovic, '11





# Super educator

## Lankford leaves lasting impression on district.

After growing up watching his mother teach in a one-room school house, Ron Lankford, '71, always knew he would follow in her footsteps.

Educating young minds was a calling that ran in the Lankford family.

Lankford started his career in 1973 and served as a teacher, counselor, junior high school principal, high school principal, and superintendent. He dedicated himself to the Webb City Public Schools District for 33 years. In 2010, the Missouri Association of School Administrators named Lankford Superintendent of the Year, but he takes no credit for the award, attributing it to the overwhelming support he has received.

"If you're living in a community not supportive of its schools, this award would not be possible," Lankford said. "I accepted the award on behalf of the community, staff and students. Everyone worked together to make it happen."

Lankford announced his retirement from the Webb City, Missouri, school district in 2010, but his break as an educator was short. The Missouri Department of Education selected Lankford as deputy commissioner of fiscal and administrative services.

Lankford may have left the district, but his legacy remains.

"We'll still reap benefits from his work," said Tim Davied, Webb City Junior High School principal, "and we'll still maintain his standards."

Davied described Lankford as an inspirational leader who cared about the district and its students and employees. One moment sticks out above the rest in Davied's mind. He had missed a day of work to attend a funeral and was moved by the

consolation he received.

"Dr. Lankford made sure he was in my office the next day to check on me and make sure I was doing OK," Davied said. "That really meant a lot."

Lankford credits Missouri Southern for preparing him for a successful career in education.

"Their focus was always on the students," said Lankford, a Seneca, Missouri native.

"I felt just as well prepared as other students when I went on to graduate school. MSSU gave me a good foundation of education to build off of."

His parents' dream was to see him go to college, and the Lankford family was thrilled when Southern became a four-year institution.

"It was a great opportunity at our doorstep," Lankford said.

He was part of the first incoming freshman class on the current MSSU campus. He graduated with a bachelor's in education and went on to the University of Missouri for his doctorate.

Lankford spent many years impacting the lives of countless students. His focus has always been helping them mature into responsible adults.

"I take the most pride in watching them grow. They go further than you ever dream they would," he said.

Davied said Lankford's dedication was evident at Webb City.

"He had a vision for what was best for the students," Davied said. "He was never there for himself but always for the students." 

— Heather Carlton, '11

### RON LANKFORD

- ▶ Helped organize the All-Area Academic Excellence Team and was chairman of the academic excellence selection committee.
- ▶ The Webb City R-7 School District achieved the state's designation of Accredited with Distinction for nine of the past 10 years.
- ▶ Helped establish the Southwest Center for Educational Excellence.

# SOBA contributes to global economy

**T**wo years ago, the Robert W. Plaster School of Business Administration was awarded a prestigious grant in excess of \$500,000 from the U.S. Agency for International Development to foster economic renewal in Haiti through higher education. Dr. Nii Abrahams and Chris Moos, co-directors of the grant, and Kim Gray, former program manager, co-authored the grant. The grant's goals were to promote workforce development through public workshops and restructuring curriculum to meet the needs of business; to foster faculty development in the areas of accounting and finance; and to enable seven academically talented Haitian university students to complete undergraduate degrees in business at Missouri Southern.

As a result of the earthquake of January 2010, where more than 200,000 lives were lost and 1 million Haitians were left homeless, higher education in Haiti became less attainable than ever. The Haitian Ministry of Education reported that approximately 80 percent of schools in Port-au-Prince, in which institutions of higher education are concentrated, were damaged or destroyed. Colleges and universities turned their attention to acquiring basic essentials such as books, computers, desks and chairs. They resumed operations in tent classrooms while awaiting the reconstruction of campuses.

Despite this major setback, SOBA revised its objectives in order to continue pursuing the course of economic renewal through higher education in Haiti. This past summer, the seven

*Seven students from Haiti found summer internships in the Joplin, Missouri, area after the January 2010 earthquake devastated Haiti and its financial sector. Students graduating in December include (front row, left) Suzette Sinclair, Gaelle Simon, Ajala Constant; (center) Donnatel Julien; (back row, left) Claude Bazille, Samuel Zephir, Marc Claude.*

— Photo by Curtis Almeter



Haitian students studying at MSSU gained valuable job training through internships. The internships were originally scheduled to take place in the Haitian financial sector. Since this became unfeasible due to the earthquake, MSSU turned to the local business community for assistance.

Organizations, including the Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce, Freeman and St. John's hospitals, King Press, and Hometown Bank, offered opportunities for internships in their accounting or finance departments for eight weeks.

"We have been very pleased with the work done by interns Gaelle Simon and Samuel Zephir in our accounting department this summer," said Shelly Hunter, chief financial officer of St. John's Regional Medical Center. "At St. John's, we are excited to share opportunities for interns to experience a true business world setting through MSSU's program, and we benefit from the extra support interns provide."

In the coming months, we plan to focus on starting an entrepreneurship center in Port-au-Prince. The center would be based on MSSU's Small Business and Technology Development Center and would focus on teaching skills and introducing tools to help Haitian entrepreneurs better manage their businesses by reinforcing their capacity in accounting and finance.

It has been a pleasure to work with these wonderful young people from Haiti. They have been excellent students and citizens. All of the students will graduate in December and return to Haiti equipped with the knowledge and skills to assist their country in its economic renewal.

— Dr. Beverly Block, Interim Dean, Robert W. Plaster School of Business Administration



# Q&A:

In search of justice for animals, alumna Betsy Banks Saul, '91, develops a way to find homes for unwanted pets, decrease animal euthanasia and earn honors for helping to change the world.

**Q:** What is petfinder.com and what motivated you to start this online service?

**A:** Petfinder is where you can meet all of the amazing, adoptable pets waiting for homes in shelters and rescue groups across the country. Today, there are about 300,000 pets posted from more than 13,000 adoption organizations. You only need to have one special relationship with a particular pet to forever be touched by the injustice of the current state of animal welfare in most communities. Petfinder was my answer to that injustice. I thought that if only people knew about the vast amount of love waiting in shelters — the loyal companions just waiting to be chosen and taken home — then we could increase adoptions and stop killing pets simply for lack of a home. When we started Petfinder in 1996, it was estimated that the U.S. was euthanizing more than 16 million pets in shelters. This year, that number will be less than 4 million — still too high, but amazing progress by the animal welfare community in 15 years.

**Q:** Woman's Day named you one of the 50 Women Who Are Changing The World. What did it mean to receive this honor?

**A:** It was incredibly validating. Over the years, the Petfinder team, along with all of the shelter workers and adoption volunteers across the country, has worked tirelessly to end the euthanasia of adoptable pets. Years ago, our cause would not have hit the radar as a "changing the world" issue. Being named among 50 women like Oprah, Angelina Jolie, and Hillary Clinton meant a lot to me personally, but as a benchmark, it meant even more for companion animal welfare.

**Q:** What has been the key to your success?

**A:** No doubt my parents, who gave me the distinct impression that I could do anything; my ex-husband, Jared (co-founder of Petfinder), who truly CAN do any-



Betsy Banks Saul, '91, relaxes on her North Carolina farm with her goat Biscuit. Betsy graduated from Missouri Southern with a bachelor's in biology and co-founded the website, [www.petfinder.com](http://www.petfinder.com), which helps find homes for unwanted pets that end up in animal shelters or with breed rescue groups.

— Submitted photo

thing technical; and the amazing people in animal welfare, who may have thought we were nuts when we first asked them to put their pets on the "World Wide Web" in 1996, but were willing to TRY anything to save pets.

**Q:** How did MSSU prepare you for your career?

**A:** This question makes me think of the financial aid department. I joke with people when I hire them that I don't care what college they went to. And, I don't really care what their degree is. What I do care about is whether they successfully navigated the financial aid department! That tells me something about them. I had a good experience at Southern, and I've always been proud of the breadth of knowledge I gained there — even when stacked up to my friends, colleagues and employees who attended fancier schools like Harvard, Yale and Princeton. I really enjoyed the small classes and a relationship with instructors you can't find at many schools.

**Q:** You have appeared on The Ellen DeGeneres Show. Have you appeared on other shows and what is the message you hope to get across?

**A:** In addition to appearing on *Ellen* twice, I've had the privilege of being on many shows, like the *Today Show* and major news shows. Petfinder played a large role in the Hurricane Katrina response, and for those weeks, I would go into NYC for days at a time to do multiple news shows, especially on Fox, MSNBC and CNN, because the demand for information about the pets was so great.

— Emily Mergen, '11

Betsy Banks Saul, '91, lives in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and graduated from Missouri Southern with a bachelor of science in biology and a minor in chemistry. She also holds a master's in forest resources from Clemson University. Her parents, Joan and Mike Banks, live in Joplin, where her father was a professor of education at Southern. Her parents work for Petfinder, and her brother, John Banks, is a student at Missouri Southern.

## Dear Alumni & Friends:

Just a note to tell you about a very special event — the 75th anniversary of the founding of Missouri Southern (1937-2012). The campus is alive with excitement as we gather thoughts, emotions and ideas for the event.

Everyone wants to provide a fun-filled year of academic activities and events that celebrates our pride in Missouri Southern. But, we need your help in telling the stories of people, history and traditions. Please send your story idea to [Pound-l@mssu.edu](mailto:Pound-l@mssu.edu) or tell us your story in 750 to 1,000 words, by April 10, 2011.

We look forward to hearing from you,  
**Brad Belk; Bob Higgins, '43; Paul**

**Kern, '75; and Lee Elliff Pound, '86**  
75th Anniversary History Book  
Editorial Board

## Fund for musical arts awards grant goes to MSSU Symphony Orchestra

The selection committee of the Vivian León Fund for the Musical Arts announced its first grants, totaling \$4,000. The grants went to two area organizations, including Missouri Southern's Symphony Orchestra.

The orchestra received funds for "Rio Carnaval!" presented on November 5. The program featured a festive concert of Brazilian music, as part of the university's theme semester focusing on Brazil. The orchestra, under the direction of Dr. Kexi Liu, performed a free concert that included a concerto by well-known Brazilian composer Carmago Guarnieri with pianist Max Barros.

Joplin's Pro Musica also received a grant to support a program in Joplin with Duo Prism, a piano-violin ensemble, scheduled for January. Comprised of pianist Rieko Aizawa and violinist Jesse Mills, Duo Prism will stage a formal concert free to the public and two school concerts for a total of about 400 elementary-age students.

The Vivian León Fund for the Musical Arts is an endowment partner of the Community Foundation of Southwest Missouri.

## Endowment benefits music students with help for instruments and travel

Students of the MSSU Music Department can thank Dr. John and Joy Cragin, Joplin, Missouri, for a new endowment fund that will help strengthen educational

opportunities at the university.

The Cragins made a generous gift to the Missouri Southern Foundation to establish an endowment fund called Friends of the MSSU Music Department. Earnings will help pay for areas of need in the department, including the purchase of new instruments, support for travel expenses to performances, and other needs.

The gift comes with a challenge. The Cragins stipulated that an additional \$2,500 must be raised and added to the endowment before earnings can be distributed. Once that has been completed, the Cragins pledged to donate \$1,000 annually to the fund, providing the university raises the same amount each year. This means the base fund could grow at least \$2,000 each year.

To contribute to Friends of the MSSU Music Department, contact JoAnn Graffam at the Foundation, 417-625-3072.

## Southern art instructor showcases her artwork at galleries this fall

This fall, works of art by Josie Mai, assistant professor of art at Missouri Southern, were displayed at art galleries in Kansas City and Nevada, Missouri.

The display titled "A Sense of Order" was featured at the Leedy Voulkos Art Center in Kansas City, Missouri, in September and October. The exhibit was then featured from November 17 to December 16 at the PEO Foundation Gallery at Cottey College in Nevada.

"I make art because it is a tangible, immediate way to process my life and what interests me visually and intuitively," Mai said. Information on Mai's work can be found online at [www.josiemai.com](http://www.josiemai.com) and [www.soulfarikenya.com](http://www.soulfarikenya.com).

## KGCS-TV general manager receives honor from local business journal

The *Joplin Tri-State Business Journal* named Judy Stiles, general manager of Southern's KGCS-TV, as one of the 15 Most Influential Women of 2010.

Stiles was honored at a luncheon on August 26.

An independent panel of judges selected the individuals. More than 80 women from Missouri, Kansas and Oklahoma were nominated this year.

Stiles has served as general manager of KGCS-TV since 1993. She also works as an adjunct instructor at MSSU. As general manager, she oversees the daily operation of the regional broadcast TV station that reaches 167,800 households. She produces and hosts the weekly news program, "Newsmakers." In more than 24 years of the program, Stiles has produced more than 1,250 shows and interviewed more than 1,300 people. Stiles has been involved with community organizations and is president of the Joplin NALA Read Board of Directors.

— Stephen E. Smith, '77



*The Lions mascot hangs out with a student at Campus Craze this fall at MSSU. — Photo by Mike Gullett*

# CIS means positive job outlook

The world of computer science as we know it today would have inspired Alan Turing who described the concept of the "universal machine" in the late 1930s. Computing is



an integral part of today's global economy by being a vital component to science, business, the Internet and digital communications. Our culture changed over the last decade with the use of the iPod, YouTube, computer animated movies, Facebook and other forms of social networking. Computer science majors make an impact on the work and employment for all of these entities. Computer technology is projected to become a more powerful and pervasive tool in our society. This only increases the demand for individuals with a strong background in computer science.

The computer information science department provides opportunities for a broad undergraduate education in the many aspects of information technology systems engineering and solution development. Current and ongoing demand for information technology graduates is evidenced by a new study of graduate salaries published by the National Association of Colleges and Employers. The winter 2010 issue of NACE's Salary Survey reports that the overall average offer to a bachelor's degree graduate in 2010 is down 2 percent from the average offer made in 2009. However, graduates with IT-related degrees, including computer programming, computer science, computer systems analysis, and information sciences/systems, posted a 6.1 percent increase.

CIS graduates choosing to pursue entry-level jobs have been successful. They are actively recruited by local companies, including Leggett & Platt, Jack Henry and Associates, and Walmart. Many graduates have been hired by well-known companies outside the four-state region, such as Google, eBay, Credit Suisse and Microsoft. Graduates wishing to pursue advanced degrees find they are well qualified. The Walton Graduate School of Business at the University of Arkansas waives its summer preparatory courses for MSSU CIS graduates, which it does not do for most entering MBA information systems students.

The CIS program offers courses of instruction that develop a thorough understanding of current methods used in the design and implementation of IT based solutions. The curriculum also

## CIS full-time faculty

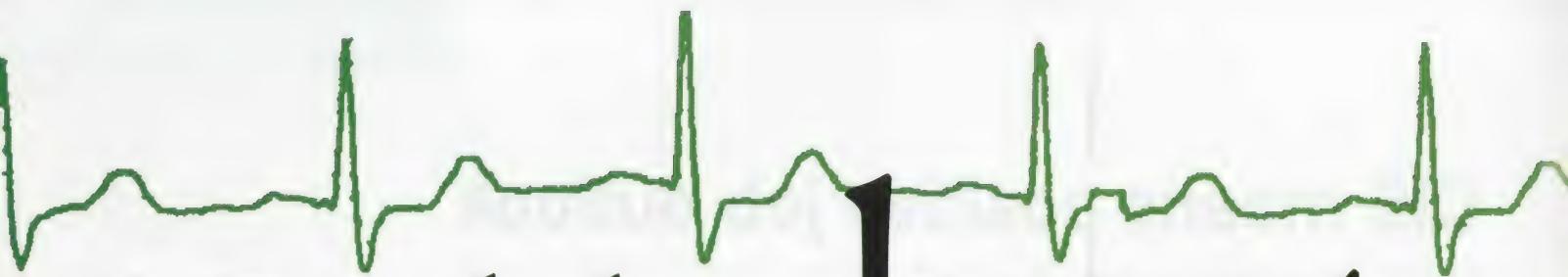
- ▶ Dr. Jack Oakes, department head; holds a Ph.D., computer science, Missouri University of Science and Technology; teaches programming, including database management I and data structures
- ▶ Dr. Jim Collins, associate professor; holds a Ph.D., information science, Nova Southeastern University; develops Web-based courses.
- ▶ Dennis Herr, associate professor; holds an MBA, Pittsburg State University; teaches RPG programming using an IBM AS/400 (i-Series) midrange computer, networking and website development courses
- ▶ Lyle Mays, professor; holds an M.S., University of Washington; teaches website administration, programming, Java and developing computer game software.
- ▶ Stephen Schiavo, associate professor; holds a master's in management of technology, University of Texas; teaches systems analysis, design, and development; project management.
- ▶ Hartford Tunnell, associate professor; holds an M.Ed., Texas State University; has ongoing IT consulting experience with major corporations, including Walmart.

*Since 1991, 90 percent of Missouri Southern State University CIS grads landed IT-related jobs or attended graduate school within 1.5 years post graduation. For additional information about Southern's CIS program, contact Dr. Jack Oakes at oakes-j@mssu.edu, by phone at 417-625-9683, or online at <http://www.mssu.edu/technology/cis>.*

includes an effective internship program. Qualified juniors and seniors are placed with participating organizations under the guidance and supervision of an IT professional. The experience may earn them up to six hours of college credit and invaluable insight into how their knowledge can be used to solve real-world problems. Many internships convert to full-time positions upon graduation.

— Dr. Tia Strait, '85 & '93, Dean, School of Technology

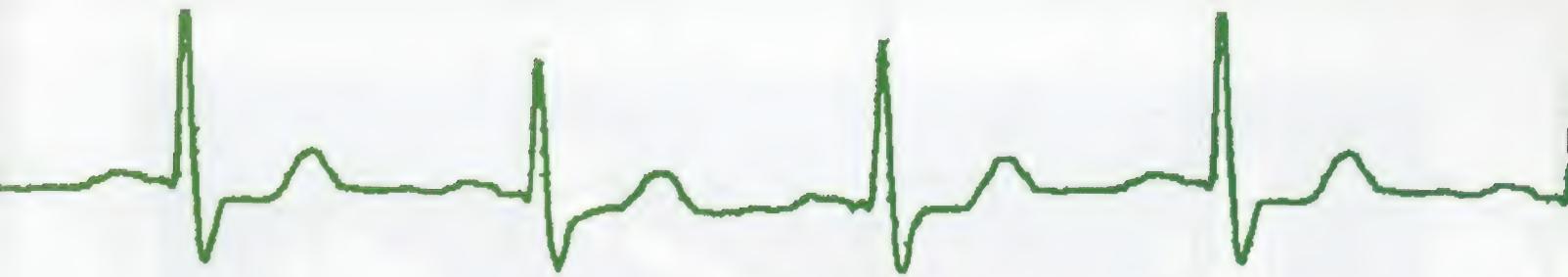
SCiences



# Healthy beat



Valerie Vandever (left) and April Englebert, nursing majors, practice taking vitals on one of the new human simulator patients in the Health Sciences Building's simulation lab. — Photo by Andrew Pavlovic '11



## Health Sciences Building offers high-tech education with simulated scenarios and state-of-the-art facilities.



Dental patients enter the professional waiting room and check in with the receptionist. After stepping through the doorway to the dental hygiene clinic, the sound of teeth cleaning appliances whir, as student hygienists check the computer monitors for records and X-rays.

One floor up, a nursing instructor handles the controls in a simulated lab. Nursing, respiratory therapy, and radiology students team up to manage the "patient" in a setting as real as a hospital, but as unreal as a scene from "Grey's Anatomy."

Welcome to Missouri Southern's new Health Sciences Building. This past summer, the 85,000-square-foot facility officially became the home for several departments.

"The big thing about what we have now is that we have adequate space, including two designated clinical labs, that will accommodate our students," said Glenda Pippin, head of respiratory therapy. "Having all health care departments in one building has allowed us to collaborate with other departments and share equipment — we can tap each others resources."

The departments of nursing, dental hygiene, respiratory therapy, radiology and psychology call the building home. The kinesiology department did not move, but the new space has afforded extra room to evaluate physical wellness activities.

The Health Sciences Building evolved from years of planning and searching for funding. The facility features state-of-the-art equipment and technology to help prepare students entering the health field or conducting research in psychology.

And the best part? State funding paid for the \$18 million cost for the facility and equipment.

The Lewis and Clark Discovery Initiative provided up to \$18.9 million for the Health Sciences Building's construction, equipment and supplies. Bob Harrington, '98, said the actual cost came in under the

# What they're saying: Students



Joe Lutes,  
Graduate Nursing Student  
*"The new building is a great improvement over the old facilities that will enhance our ability to learn."*



Tonna Carrico,  
Senior Nursing Student  
*"I think that MSSU nursing students are really lucky to have the new sim lab. We went from learning clinical skills in the basement of the criminal justice building to practicing on state-of-the-art equipment."*



Amber Perrin,  
First-year Student,  
Respiratory Therapy  
*"The building presents a greater opportunity for achievement."*



Katie Gage,  
First-year Student,  
Radiologic Technology  
*"The new building allows us to be in contact with multiple programs. Before, we were isolated."*

*We now have our own computers and updated equipment to look at X-ray images. The old equipment was so outdated it was difficult to use. We now have the ability to work on the same equipment being used in the local hospital, where we do our clinicals."*

allowable amount. All of the departments had advisory boards that helped with the planning process, which has been a vision for more than 10 years.

"It's a very, very neat building inside," Harrington said. "Every classroom is equipped with projector screens, Smart Boards, all the latest technology from that standpoint. It's going to be a truly outstanding facility for the students and a phenomenal addition to the campus."

The main entrance to the building, which faces the Leggett & Platt Athletic Center, welcomes students and others with a multi-level staircase, shielded with a glass wall from the second to third floors. The top floor offers some of the best views of Southern's campus, whether looking east toward Fred G. Hughes Stadium, to the southwest and Spiva Library, or to the north and Taylor Performing Arts Center.

Lounge areas in each department provide much-needed break spots, where students can study, grab a snack or simply hang out in between classes.

For the past two years, the nursing department occupied space in the basement of the Mills Anderson Justice Center. The staff is excited to finally move into the bright, open building on the second floor.

"I think it's a wonderful opportunity for our students to have a good learning environment for a much-needed profession," said Patricia Hempsyer, assistant professor of nursing.

Dr. Tia Strait, '85 and '93, dean of the school of technology, said the job outlook for nursing majors is good, with the need expected to increase 23 percent by 2016, according to the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The job outlook is good for all health professions, and the Health Sciences Building provides a unique learning experience for students.

"Prior to this facility, the majority of the preclinical training had to be accomplished

at the area medical centers, which limited the number of students accepted into each program," Strait said. "One example is the radiology program, which now has two energized laboratories, one equipped with a digital radiographic machine. Faculty can prepare students to be competent in positioning, use of equipment, identifying quality images and correcting any errors prior to treating 'real' patients at our medical centers."

The dental hygiene clinic moved to the Health Sciences Building in August, after being crammed into Ummel Technology, where patients had to wait in the hallway. Students and faculty now spread out over 5,300 square feet, with half walls separating the 22 dental units, six digital radiology cubicles, and two panographic X-ray units. Patients wait, relax and flip through magazines in a separate reception area.



Psychology majors also have new research facilities, including an animal behavior lab, as well as a five-suite human observation lab. Researchers can monitor human subjects via one-way glass.

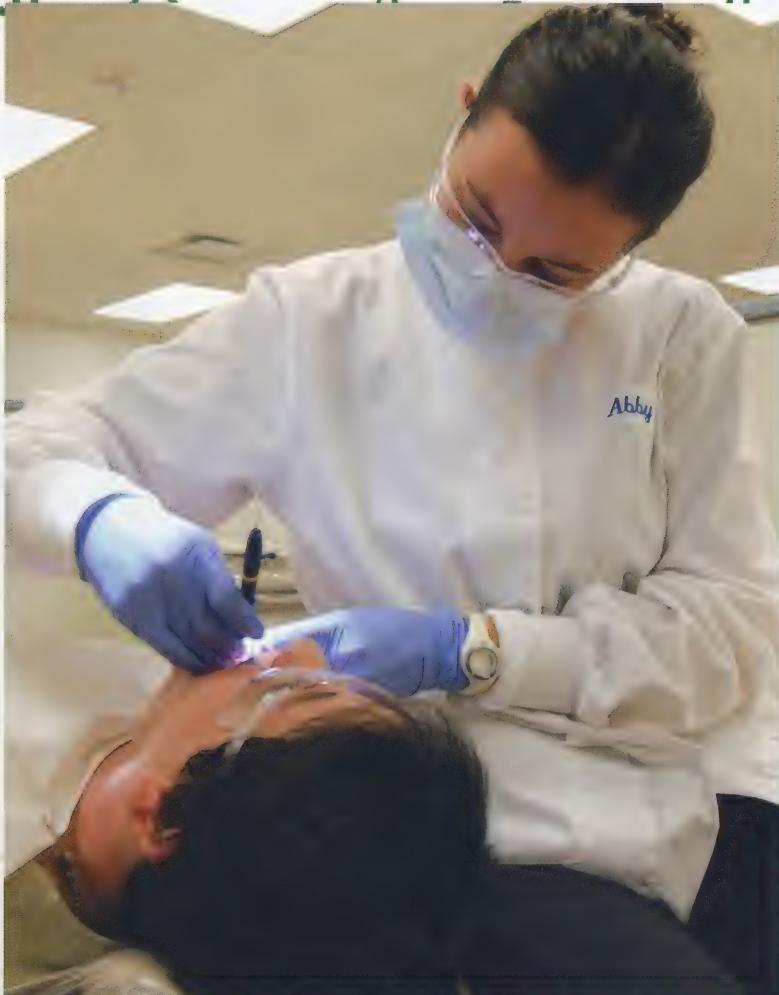
"We have a lot more facilities and space," said Karly Kownslar, senior psychology major. "I am really excited to be here for my last year."

And that excitement is expected to continue, as new majors discover the opportunities found in the Health Sciences Building.

"The move to the new building allows for sharing of resources and development of an interdisciplinary team approach to patient care," Strait said. "If health care professionals are trained to perform as interdisciplinary teams working together, taking advantage of the skills and knowledge of their teammates, the change can be implemented when these students graduate and enter their chosen profession."

Rebecca Hartmann, '11, associate editor, contributed to this story.

— Rhonda Clark, '00



Above and left, Abby Rainey, senior dental hygiene major, performs a check up on a walk-in patient in the new dental hygiene clinic in the Health Sciences Building. Lower left, Missouri Southern students listen as Ron Richard, '69, speaks at the dedication ceremony for the Health Sciences Building on November 19, 2010.

— Photos by Andrew Pavlovic, '11, and Rod Surber



## What <sup>they're</sup> saying: Program directors



Alan Schiska,  
Radiologic Technology

*"The new building is state-of-the-art. It provides the students with more space than before and access to the latest computer technology. In addition, the students love the idea of having windows as opposed to being on the lower level of Kuhn Hall where there is no natural light from outside."*



Glenda Pippin,  
Respiratory Care

*"To me it means having a state-of-the-art facility that we can all be proud of. We will be able to provide the students with an environment that is conducive to learning. The benefit of having a simulation lab for the students to have access to scenarios that can be created in a controlled environment is priceless."*



Deb Gerecke,  
Dental Hygiene

*"The move to the Health Sciences Building is very exciting for the faculty and students in the dental hygiene department. We are looking forward to the fresh new, and larger space. The dental hygiene clinic will be larger by two chairs, allowing us the opportunity to serve more patients' preventive oral health care needs."*



Mari Beth Linder,  
Nursing

*"It is great to see these wonderful facilities and resources for nursing."*

# Our journey was long, but many helped bring us home.

By Lee Elliff Pound, '86

**W**hen you work on a project like this, it takes a lot of people — volunteers, board members, donors — you hear a lot of voices. Sometimes those voices come from inside your own head. This journey that we have been on for the past six years will introduce you to some of the voices I've actually heard ... real voices of this story, and not just the ones I've heard from inside my own head.

Voice No. 1 came from Bob Higgins, '42, and the day he bounded into our second Alumni Board strategic planning session and pulled out antique photos of the Mansion and announced in his smooth and calm voice that we are going to renovate the Mansion to become the new alumni center. My inside voice told me this was going to be quite a journey.

Voice No. 2 was Bryan Vowels, '92, who was a part of the strategic planning committee. He called me and in his always upbeat voice said he may have a potential donor for the Mansion. My inside voice told me, "Hey, this just might work."

The third voice came from a sweet lady who I am

fortunate enough to have been able to call my friend — the late Mary Helen Harutun. In her sweet voice, she told me tales of her dear husband, Miney, and their beautiful home — quite like that of the Mansion. She came to visit it twice, the second time pulling out a photo of her home that did look like the Mansion. With the front door open on a nice fall afternoon, she pointed to the tree toward the front of the Mansion and then to the one in her picture. They were almost identical in size and color. She walked over to the fireplace and said it reminded her of the one in their home where she used to hold weekly piano recitals for her students. She smiled, nodded and then said, "This is right, MH. Get it? MH, Mission Hills; MH, Mary Helen; MH, Miney Harutun." My inside voice could only say, "Wow."

Voices came and went for a while — the voices from the Mansion committee of Jeff Johnson, '82, and Keith Adams, '49, — always supportive, ever hopeful. Some voices we still hear and call upon more often than they would like, like John Tiede. And some we can only remember fondly in our hearts, like Curt Betebenner, '75.



Original tiles from the fountain at Mission Hills Mansion were given to guests at the Ralph L. Gray Alumni Center dedication.



# Alumni Center at Mission Hills Mansion Home



Alumni and friends of Missouri Southern gather in the Alumni Courtyard for the opening reception of the Ralph L. Gray Alumni Center, September 18, 2010. The reception and dinner honored Ralph Gray for his leadership role in the Alumni Center renovation. — Photo by Andrew Pavlovic, '11



*Top, the Music Room was underwritten by Mary Helen Harutun in memory of her husband, Miney. Center left, Courtney, Cassandra and Ralph, '75, Gray cut the ceremonial green ribbon along with University President Bruce Speck and Alumni Director Lee Elliff Pound, '86. Center right, Dr. Jimmy Couch, retired English faculty member, responds to an anecdote by Ralph Gray during the donor appreciation dinner. Above, the Mission Hills Mansion Kitchen was underwritten by Helen-Louise (Hough, '49) Elliff in honor of the Hough, Elliff and Pound families. Appliances were donated by Jon Anderson, '93, of Metro Appliances and More. Historic photos line the stairway of the center. — Photos by Jimmy Sexton*



Other voices joined in. Ralph Gray, '75, for what we'll call Round One, in his booming voice put us to where we thought we could see daylight at the end of the tunnel.

And then a voice that I hear quite often, almost every day after work and certainly every evening at 10 p.m., my mom, Helen-Louise (Hough, '49) Elliff, who sponsored the kitchen, the heart of every home.

Brad Belk spoke about the importance of our history, and he camped out on this site to make sure it was done just right.

And Amber Sachetta and Pam Mense, '05, went far and above what any interior decorators would do. They spent hours scrubbing floors and even spreading mulch.

Another great voice we all recognize during the basketball season, Robert Corn, '78, called one day with the idea to raise more money – and hence, the Alumni Room was born. This room was underwritten by former Alumni Board members to establish a Board Room.

A voice that many times tells you to "Open wide," said, "I'll do a Wall of Fame to celebrate our Outstanding Alumni." One

himself, Dr. Mike LaFerla, '89, a wonderful orthodontist, provided a lasting gift to honor those alumni.

And then a booming voice reappeared for Round Two — Ralph Gray, similar to John "The Duke" Wayne and not unlike James Bond, was a charming hero to save the day! We hope he is as pleased with the Alumni Center as we are. What a kind and wonderful gift to his alma mater and what a wonderful namesake for his daughters, Cassandra and Courtney.

Then along comes a voice of a recent past Alumni Board President, Jenny Richards, '86, with husband Troy, '90, and son Tristan and tells us they will warm up the chilly autumn nights with an outdoor fireplace.

Then a voice on the phone gave a resounding, "Yes!" the same day he received a letter asking for new kitchen appliances. Jon Anderson, '93, at Metro Appliances and More, voiced his support of MSSU and of his KA brothers in beautiful stainless steel.

And finally five more voices who really get tired of hearing mine. They may have said yes to shut me up, or they may have

said yes because it made a great birthday gift for the gal who has everything: my brother Mark Elliff, '79; his wife Vicki (Bay, '80) Elliff; my sister, Anne Elliff; and my husband, Mike, and our daughter, Emma, who said they would restore the fountain in honor of our mom and in memory of our dad, Kenneth J. Elliff, '48. The fountain is named "The Dennis Weaver, '43, Memorial Fountain" for yet another JJC alum.

And just when I thought I'd hear no more voices for a while, a phone call came from Gerrie Weaver, '43. Before we knew it, the week of the grand opening, a huge box of goodies from her arrived. Inside the box was a treasure of Dennis' collection, including the original "McCloud" shirt, jacket, tie and hat, which are on permanent display in the Alumni Center.

To all who helped make this a part of their home, a place for students to call home, and a permanent home for the Alumni Association, please accept a sincere thank you from all of us at Missouri Southern and the Ralph L. Gray Alumni Center.

— Lee Elliff Pound, '86, Alumni Director



# Picture perfect open house



1. Ralph Gray & daughters Cassandra & Courtney. 2. Past Alumni Board President Linda Dean, '78, & Alumni Coordinator Elisa Bryant, '04. 3. Mark, '99, & Stephanie, '00, Lloyd. 4. Helen-Louise (Hough, '49) Elliff (second from right) & her family (from left) Mark, '79, & Vicki, '80 (Bay), Elliff, Jennifer Elliff, Lee, '86 (Elliff), Mike & Emma Pound; & Anne Elliff. 5. Richard Webster, '71. 6. Ron Mitchell, '71, (left), Bill Webster, '78, Becky Mitchell & Ron Richard, '69. 7. Gray & long-time friend Randy Rogers, '72. 8. Elizabeth Betebenner accepts a gift in honor of her late husband, Curt, '75. 9. Erv, '75, & Lea Ann, '85, Langan. 10. Alumni Board Member Jalon Pepmiller-Smith, '05, & husband JC. 11. Noppadol Paothong, '02, & his photo of a Missouri dogwood. 12. President and Mrs. Bruce Speck. 13. Gray & Bunny Newton. 14. Alumni Board President Paul Kern, '75. 15. Troy, '90, Jenny, '86, & Tristan Richards. 16. Lloyd & Kern present gifts to Pound & Bryant. 17. Bob Higgins, '42, & Floyd Belk, '48. 18. Ron, '97, Roberta, '81, & Stephne, '95, Barnett. 19. Bryan, '93, & Joann Vowels accept an award for the late Mary Helen Harutun — Photos by Sexton, Gullett & Pavlovic



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*This donor list is current as of  
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# What a Treat

*Arthur Johnson, member of the MSSU drumline, keeps the beat in the halftime performance.*

— Photos by Mike Gullett

# Shocktober events delight Southern fans



Above, MSSU Student Alumni Association members Chelsea Jones, vice president, and Tiffany Roberts toss pumpkins and treats to the crowd along the parade route on campus. Below left, the Lion mascot takes a moment to visit with a young fan during the October 30 Homecoming parade.



Above right, little lions could be found throughout the campus for Homecoming as many youngsters came in costume for the Shocktober events on Halloween weekend.

Below, members of the MSSU Theatre Club — Aaron Weiss (left), David Duncan, Ashley Trotner, Rory Stuckey and Hunter Dowell — portray the Addams Family on their float.



Homecoming 2010 was certainly a weekend to remember. Events kicked off on the Friday of Halloween weekend with the coronation of the Homecoming king and queen at the picnic. Jasmine Jones was crowned queen and Justin Coale was crowned king, and both represented the Residence Hall Association.

Friday night's events honored Outstanding Alumnus Rod Smith, '93, and Lion-Hearted recipients Dr. Larry and Donna McIntire.

Others were also recognized at the events.

The 2009 Superior Service Award winners were Tim Dodge, '04, facilities planner in physical plant; Julie Wengert, '01, assistant athletic director of compliance; and Brenda Hayes, secretary for kinesiology.

The Outstanding Teachers for 2009-10 were Dr. Barry E. Brown, Outstanding Teacher; Dr. Kexi Liu, Outstanding International Education Teacher; and Jill Smith, '82, Outstanding Faculty Adviser.

The 2010 Athletic Hall of Fame Class included Shally Lundien, '03, softball; Albert Bland, '96, football; and Dalana (Lofland) Rutledge, '98, women's track and field.

This year's alumni-sponsored Homecoming events would not have been possible without the foresight and diligence of the Alumni Board.

Board members assist with this project all year long in the planning phases. During Homecoming weekend, they are scattered throughout campus assisting with the parade, brunch, tailgating, floats and reunions.

If you see an Alumni Board member, please be sure to extend your thanks to them.

We encourage all alumni to be an active and supportive member by providing MSSU with your time and talents. Mark your calendar for October 1, 2011, for next year's Homecoming events. We look forward to seeing you then.

— Lee Elliff Pound, '86

## 2010 OUTSTANDING ALUMNUS

College and pro football standout Rod Smith, '93, graduated from Missouri Southern with many

awards. He was All-American in football and reached similar levels in the classroom, completing two degrees with a bachelor of science in business administration in economics and finance, and marketing and management. He was named the 1994 Outstanding Graduate following his graduation in December 1993.

A native of Texarkana, Arkansas, Smith enjoyed a stellar career at Southern, where he set MIAA records in career receiving yards and touchdowns. Smith helped the Lions to their last MIAA title and NCAA postseason appearance when the team went 9-1-1 in 1993.

Smith entered the NFL with the Denver Broncos as a college free agent on May 3, 1994. He holds Broncos franchise records for career receptions, receiving yards, touchdown catches and overall touchdowns. He also leads all undrafted players in NFL history in every major career-receiving category. Smith is the first player from the MIAA to score a touchdown in the Super Bowl, and the first to play for two Super Bowl winning teams (Super Bowl XXXII and XXXIII).

He leads all undrafted players in NFL history in every major career receiving category. Smith was named to the Pro Bowl in 2000, 2001 and 2004. He retired from the NFL this past season. Smith was inducted into the Missouri Southern Athletics Hall of Fame in 2003 and is the only football player in Southern history to have his number (9) retired. He was also inducted into the Division II Football Hall of Fame, as well as the Arkansas, Missouri and Colorado Sports Hall of Fame.

An independent distributor for Organo Gold Healthy Coffee, Smith has three children: Vanessa, Roderick and Devin.



**Rod Smith, '93**

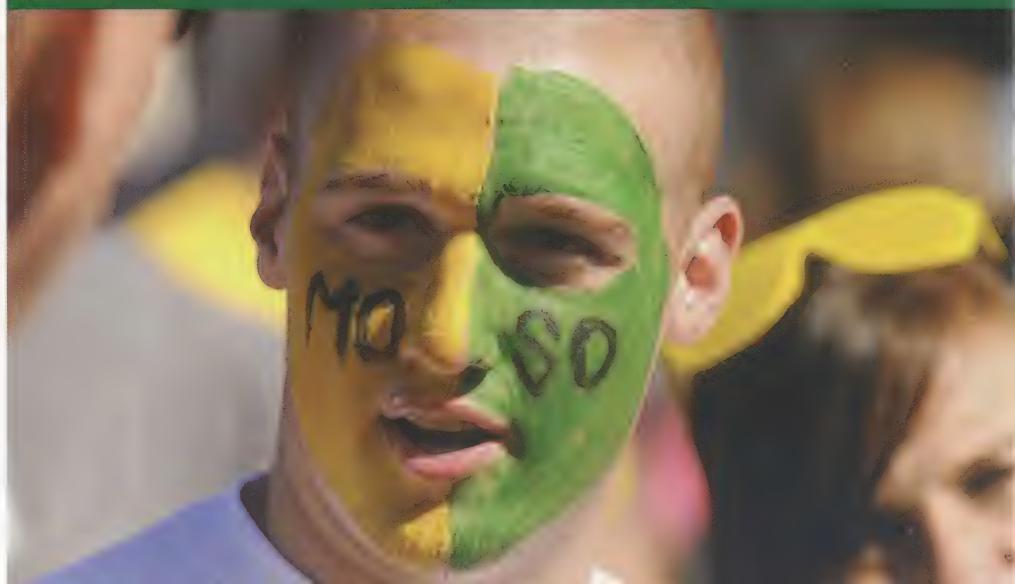


*Above, Kylan Corcoran, 4, and Anna Corcoran, 2, enjoy the parade with their aunt, Lindsey Littlefield, '08 (left), and grandmother, Chrys Corcoran, assistant professor of nursing. Below left, Rod Smith, '93, grabs more candy to throw to the crowd during the Homecoming parade. Smith was named the 2010 Outstanding Alumnus.*



*Above right, Missouri Southern student Kim Diaz distributes programs before the game outside of Fred G. Hughes Stadium.*

*Below, a Lions fan gets his Moso on. Face painting booths helped Southern fans show off their true colors at the Homecoming game.*





Above, University President Bruce Speck and his wife, Carmen, congratulate Homecoming 2010 royalty Jasmine Jones and Justin Coale.

Below left, Dr. Larry McIntire and his wife, Donna, receive recognition as the Lion-Hearted recipients during halftime festivities.



Above right, Ashley Lepper, dance team member, performs during halftime.

Below, Landon Zerkel, sophomore wide receiver for the Lions, runs past a University of Central Missouri Mule for one of Southern's three touchdowns in the Homecoming game. The Lions lost 34-21.



## 2010 LION-HEARTED

Dr. Larry and Donna McIntire were selected for the Lion-Hearted Award from the Missouri Southern Alumni Association. The award recognizes non-Missouri Southern graduates who are outstanding supporters of MSSU.



Dr. Larry and Donna McIntire

The McIntires are longtime supporters of Missouri Southern State University and have worked in health care in the Joplin area for more than two decades.

Larry McIntire graduated high school in Karval, Colorado, and received a bachelor's in business education from Adams State College in Alamosa, Colorado. He graduated with a doctor of osteopathic medicine from A.T. Still University of Osteopathic Medicine in Kirksville, Missouri. He completed graduate training in Denver, Kirksville and St. Louis, engaging in a subspecialty of ear diseases and surgery. He is resident program director-otolaryngology-head and neck surgery at Freeman Health System in Joplin and practices at the McIntire Ear, Nose and Throat Center.

\* He is secretary of Freeman Health System Board of Directors and a member of the Missouri Southern Foundation Board.

Donna McIntire graduated high school in Eads, Colorado, and received a bachelor's in English and business education at Adams State College in Alamosa, Colorado. She earned a master's in English from Emporia State University in Emporia, Kansas, and worked as a high school English teacher for 11 years. She manages McIntire Ear, Nose and Throat Center and is secretary of the athletic steering committee at Missouri Southern.

The McIntires are also active with the Church of the Nazarene. They have a son, Kent McIntire, D.O., a head and neck surgeon at McIntire Ear, Nose and Throat Center; a daughter, Susan Hull, D.O., a family medicine physician in St. Louis; and six grandchildren.



Left, Corey Reynolds, senior jumper, clears the high jump at a Southern meet last spring. Center, Emilie Mieseler earned All-American honors in the hammer throw at Nationals. Right, Jordan Patton and the 4x100 meter relay team set several records in the spring.

— Photos by Mike Gullett

# It's a wrap ... Southern excels in spring events

## Men's Track and Field

The team saw records set and had a few All-American performances in 2010.

The 4x100 meter relay team of Maurlon Bembry, Jordan Patton, Jacob Khan and Andrew Wright set a new school record in the event multiple times during the season, the last coming in qualifying at the NCAA Division II outdoor nationals. The group ran a time of 40.66 in the prelims and qualified for the finals. They duplicated the time in the finals to finish fifth and earn All-American status.

Brennan Benkert set school records throughout the season, the last coming in the 1,500 meter as he, like the relay team, set a new school record in qualifying at nationals. He then went on to claim All-American status, finishing fifth.

James Coleman set a new school record in the discus prior to nationals and kept his momentum going, finishing second to earn All-American honors. In all, the Lions had six All-Americans and 11 All-MIAA performers. Southern finished 15<sup>th</sup> overall as a team at the outdoor NCAA nationals.

## Women's Track and Field

The women had a successful year, as well, resulting in five All-American performances at the 2010 Outdoor Nationals.

The year also saw the end of one of the most dominating distance runners the MIAA, let alone Missouri Southern,

has ever seen. Kimi Shank finished her stellar four-year career as a Lion with two All-American performances at the outdoor nationals in both the 5k and the 10k, setting school records in the process. She was also a finalist for the MIAA's Ken B. Jones Award, given annually to the best male and female athletes in the conference.

The Lions also had other All-American performances at nationals, including Emilie Mieseler, the hammer throw; Nicole Green, shot; and Ciara Lipsey, pole vault. They all placed seventh in their respective events. Mieseler was also named the Missouri Southern Female Athlete of the

Year, while the Lions squad, as a whole, (cross-country and indoor and outdoor track) was named the fifth-best program in Division II by the U.S. Track and Field and Cross-Country Coaches Association.

## Softball

Softball had a tough season but continued to improve under coach Bill Gray. The Lions won 19 games and had three players — Angie Turner, Megan Roark and Kelli Bax — named All-MIAA. Despite a strong run down the stretch, including splitting the final eight games, the Lions fell short of making the MIAA Tournament.

Turner concluded her record-setting career at Southern and is the all-time leader in home runs (26) and walks (89), while setting the single-season record for walks this year with 31. She ranks fourth in career RBIs (99), fifth in total hits (181) and sixth in career batting average (.366). She earned All-MIAA status each year as a Lion.

## Golf

The Lions golf team had a season to remember under coach Kevin Greim. The Lions won the University of North Alabama's Fall classic, defeating the host team and third-ranked UNA in the process. The team score of 568 is also a new school record for lowest team total in an event.

Junior Jamie Voegeli also set an individual best, as he shot the lowest round in Missouri Southern history at the event, carding a first-round 65 (7 under par). The Lions finished tied with Washburn for

Left, Angie Turner, senior, concluded her Lion career as the all-time leader in home runs. Center, CJ Maffei was one of three Lions to sign professional contracts at season's end. Right, David Eddy works out of the sand trap at a golf match last spring.

— Photos by Mike Gullett



second in the final team standings in the MIAA, and junior Seve Smith was named an All-MIAA selection.

## Baseball

Baseball continued its resurgence under coach Bryce Darnell and made the MIAA postseason tournament for the second straight year. The Lions had their second-

straight winning record with a 28-26 mark and finished third in the MIAA Tournament, losing out to eventual Division II World Series participant Central Missouri.

Southern had, at one time, the toughest schedule in Division II, but fought through a rough 3-14 start to go 14-5 over its next 19 games and finished the regular season as the fifth seed in the MIAA Tournament. The

Lions had four players named All-MIAA and two named All-Region with senior shortstop Jacob Taylor picking up All-American honors. Junior catcher Joe Lincoln was drafted in the 34th round of the Major League Baseball draft by the Los Angeles Dodgers. Taylor and fellow senior CJ Maffei also signed professional contracts.

— Justin Maskus, Director, Sports Information

# Lions notebook



Individuals look over the silent auction items at SouthernFest '10 on July 29.

## SouthernFest '10 succeeds with its second fundraiser

Thanks to alumni and fans of the Green & Gold, SouthernFest '10 was a success. The second annual fundraiser combines the Lion Pride Dinner/Auction and the Rod Smith Golf Classic. The dinner/auction was July 29 at Downstream Casino Resort, where 257 people enjoyed a buffet dinner, rubbed elbows with other Lions fans, and bid on more than 380 items. The golf tournament was at Eagle Creek Golf Course the following day, and 42 four-person teams braved the heat to compete for prizes and to get a few swings in with MSSU Hall of Famer Rod Smith, '93.

The event raised about \$40,000 this year, with all proceeds going to support the sports teams. Presenting partner was Downstream Casino Resort and co-sponsors were Arvest Bank, Contractors' Equipment Co. and Hiland Dairy Foods.

## Scholarship endowment builds funds for women's basketball

Former Missouri Southern women's

basketball standout and MSSU Hall of Fame member Brenda Pitts-Jennings, '82, made a generous monetary gift to start an endowed women's basketball scholarship, to be awarded yearly to athletes who exemplify leadership, character, excellence on and off the court, and passion for the sport of basketball.

In recognition of Pitts-Jennings' contribution, the women's basketball locker room will be named in her honor. Pitts-Jennings played for the Lady Lions from 1978-82. She was a second-team selection to the 1982 NAIA Championships All-Tournament Team and won the NAIA Championships Hustle Award that same year.

To join Pitts-Jennings with a contribution, call Jared Bruggeman, 417-625-9317.

## Corn receives local honor from Joplin Sports Authority

Head men's basketball coach Robert Corn joined the 2010 class of the Joplin Area Sports Hall of Fame on May 14. Corn, a 1978 graduate of Missouri Southern and head coach for the past 21 seasons, was inducted alongside Joplin High School's former girls basketball player Treva Christian and former football player Jeff Tupper, '83, as well as the 1980 Parkwood football team.

The Joplin Sports Authority hosted the induction ceremony and awards.

## Former athletic director joins inaugural MIAA Hall of Fame

Former Missouri Southern athletic director Sallie Beard, '72, was one of 15 individuals and five teams in the inau-

gural class of the MIAA Hall of Fame. The group was inducted at the annual MIAA Spring Awards Dinner June 10 in Kansas City, Missouri.

Beard served Southern as a coach and athletic director for 37 years before retiring last year. She almost single-handedly started up women's athletics at Missouri Southern when she became the first head coach of women's basketball, softball and tennis, and later coached track and field.

Beard was the women's athletic director for 25 years before being named the first sole athletic director at MSSU in 2001.

## Lions name Boschee assistant for men's basketball team

Jeff Boschee, former All-Big 12 performer at the University of Kansas and most recently head boys basketball coach at Barstow School in Kansas City, has been named as an assistant coach at Missouri Southern. Boschee began his duties with the Lions on June 1.

Head coach Robert Corn, '78, said Boschee joins assistant coach Ronnie Ressel.

Boschee spent the past three seasons at Barstow, where his team went 22-4 in 2009-10. At KU, he was the Big 12 Freshman of the Year in 1999-2000.

He helped lead the Jayhawks to a Final Four appearance in 2002. Boschee is the founder, trainer and coach of the Jeff Boschee Basketball Academy in Kansas City.

— Justin Maskus, Director, Sports Information



# Leader of the pack

From student to coach, Vavra's dedication remains strong.



Patty Vavra works with Channell Lloyd. — Photo by Andrew Pavlone, '11

**G**rowing up during a time when women's athletics was still in its infancy, Patty Vavra, '80, remembers how special she felt her freshman year of high school when she was offered a spot on the track and field team. She didn't know at the time that this unique opportunity would develop into a passion and later into a prospering career as the women's head track and field and cross-country coach at Missouri Southern.

After high school, Vavra continued to make her mark on the track. The Joplin, Missouri, native enrolled at Southern as a student-athlete in 1975, an occurrence almost unheard of a decade prior. She graduated in 1980 with a bachelor's degree in physical education and health.

Vavra has fond memories of being a member of the track team and believes it

enhanced her college experience.

"I gained not only lifelong friendships," she said, "but many outstanding life lessons that have stuck with me since."

Though her experience as a student-athlete was positive, the coach was quick to point out how much the women's athletic programs at MSSU have evolved.

"They were so young, so new then. They've grown so much," she said.

In 1972, Title IX, a law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex in any education program receiving federal funding, was passed. Thus, female sports teams were just being established in the 1970s, and many women were participating in athletics for the first time.

Vavra is in awe at how far women's athletics have come in recent decades. Once regarded as inferior to men's athletics, women's sports are now well known and respected in the sports community.

As a result, Vavra's cross-country and track and field athletes are able to achieve a successful athletic experience, starting at a young age. That early start enables them more time to develop and improve their skills through the years.

"There is an unbelievable amount of more opportunity. The girls don't know the difference between then and now. Which, I mean, is great," she said "But I don't want them to take it all for granted."

Because the coach knows how fortunate her athletes are in comparison to those of the past, she takes every opportunity to enhance their collegiate experiences. On and off the track, Vavra is dedicated to her team. She not only aims to help better them as competitors but also as people.

"It's great being a part of helping them reach their goals — watching them develop as athletes as well as seeing them build character over time," she said.

Jessica Selby Tallman, a 2009 Southern graduate and former track and field athlete, will always remember the student-athlete experience as the most memorable and rewarding aspect of her higher education. She credits Vavra for many of the traits she learned during that time.

"She taught us leadership and the importance of being on a team. Those are traits that will carry over into other areas of my life," Tallman said.

For her coaching efforts, Vavra has received nine MIAA Coach of the Year awards since she arrived at Southern 16 years ago. But the humbled coach takes no credit for the awards.

"It's all because of the athletes and the assistant coaches. The awards are a direct reflection of the success our athletes have



*Patty Vavra, '80, has received nine MIAA Coach of the Year awards in her 16 years of coaching women's track and field and cross-country at Missouri Southern. — Photo by Andrew Pavlovic, '11*

gained," she said.

Tallman laughs at the thought of taking credit for such an award. In her opinion, Vavra deserves it more than anyone.

"She is very passionate about the sport and has taught us a love for track and field," she said "She's also passionate about the girls. She makes an effort to be involved. She takes care of us."

Vavra's accomplishments as a coach are another indicator of how far women's athletics have come. After coaching at a local high school for several years, Missouri Southern hired Vavra in 1994 as the women's head track and field and cross-country coach.

The coach's list of achievements at the university are significant. In addition to leading the cross-country team to finish third nationally in 2009, she has led the Lions to five MIAA championships as well as various NCAA regional titles. She coached the squads to a rare Triple Crown in 2007-08. The track and field team has also brought home multiple indoor and outdoor titles.

To top it off, many of Vavra's athletes have ranged from All-American and All-Region performers to MIAA champions

as well as national champions.

Vavra is also a '93 inductee of the Missouri Southern Athletics Hall of Fame.

This coach has made her presence known not only at the institution but also among the once male-dominated sports community.

She has played a part in the progression of athletics at Southern, helping the programs earn well-respected, valued profiles.

Jamie Burnham, assistant cross-country and track and field coach, has enjoyed working alongside Vavra for a number of years. He respects her for her commitment to the team.

"She's a good influence on the girls," he said "She's always trying to get the best out of them."

The last several years have proved memorable for the two as they've watched talented, successful athletes grow up from their first day on campus until their last day at graduation.

"I'm always proud of the young ladies. It's tough every year to see them go, but they leave an outstanding legacy," Vavra said. 

— Heather Carlton, '11



John Freeman, assistant strength and conditioning coach, came to Missouri Southern in 2008 after a career working with professional and Olympic athletes. Above right, Freeman coaches Skylar Vandiver, a senior safety on the Southern football team, last spring. — Photos by Andrew Pavlovic, '11

# 'Like a proud parent'

From professional sports to Olympic training, coach finds niche with student-athletes.

Even after working with professional athletes and an Olympic gold medalist, John Freeman still finds himself feeling most at home with student-athletes in the weight room at Missouri Southern.

The university's assistant strength and conditioning coach can usually be found chatting alongside the athletes. He not only offers expert strength training but also makes a point to get to know Southern's trainees personally.

Freeman finds that working with student-athletes at the undergraduate level has been one of his most reward-

ing experiences. His interest in collegiate athletics peaked during his undergraduate years, when he was given the chance to work as a student-trainer.

"I just like the fact that I can watch them develop from start to finish," Freeman said, "and I like the fact that they can see and feel it."

Whether it's talking about sports, sharing a few laughs, or offering a pat on the back, Freeman aspires to be more than just a coach.

"His relationship with the athletes is outstanding. He truly cares about them as people," said Troy Jorgensen, the Lions



***“His relationship with the athletes is outstanding. He truly cares about them as people.”***

head strength and conditioning coach.

Since his arrival in August 2008, Freeman has offered an array of expertise in strength and conditioning to the program, bringing more than 25 years of experience with him.

He holds an impressive resumé, having worked with several professional sports teams in the past, such as the Kansas City Chiefs and Denver Nuggets. He has also coached at Division I programs, including Oregon State, Colorado and Arizona State.

To top off his work history, Freeman helped train six Olympic teams as well as coached at three different Olympics. He recruited athlete Jill Bakken to the Olympic bobsled team in 1994. She went on to win the gold medal for the United States in the 2002 Winter Olympics.

When the Lions assistant coach job opened up two years ago, Freeman's

experience, as well as his well-rounded education in the sport, propelled him to stand out among other candidates. Jorgensen had no doubt Freeman was the right fit for the position.

“I tell myself that I’m going to bring in people smarter than I am to the program. He’s definitely in that category,” Jorgensen said.

The university’s respectable academics and the program’s strong reputation attracted Freeman.

Having lived in many states and traveled all over the country with professional teams, he was happy to settle in and call Joplin home. The Buffalo, Missouri, native has always had a soft spot for the Midwest.

“I like smaller towns. It’s much more laid back here, and it has everything I need,” he said. “And, plus, the traveling (with professional and Olympic teams)

isn’t as nice as one would think. You wake up to a different hotel and stadium every day.”

As the assistant strength and conditioning coach, he works with all sports teams at Southern. From basketball and football to cheerleading and track, Freeman is in charge of designing and implementing training programs for a variety of competitors.

Freeman is also grateful for the relationships he gains with the student-athletes through the development process. Known as a father-like figure around the weight room, his goal is to coach the trainees to succeed, not only during their time as a Lion, but also on what road life takes them afterward.

“When they win, I feel like a proud parent, and I’m so glad to be a part of that,” Freeman said. **C**

— Heather Carlton, '11

# Industrious TECHIES

## Students' ingenuity provides opportunities to create and assist local companies.

**I**nside the manufacturing lab of the Ummel Technology building, machines buzzed as students busily cut, welded and ground materials.

With these machines, students not only craft projects, they also forge valuable experience.

The Missouri Southern Industrial Engineering Technology program studies ways to improve quality and productivity through the most effective means.

Students begin the program by studying the basics of raw materials, manufacturing processes and computer aided drafting and design.

Students gain skills in data analysis, problem solving and developing effective processes. By the end of the program, they are able to apply these skills to a hands-on project.

"Down here, we put numbers to everything," said Dr. Elke Howe, head of the department of engineering technology. "The experience gained with these projects can go on resumes to show employers that students have applied what they've learned."

Depending on the course, students have the opportunity to work on projects either individually or in groups. Some students work for companies within the community to improve productivity.

Brian Smith, who graduated in May 2010 with an industrial engineering technology degree, worked for Ozark Machine Company Inc. in Webb City, Missouri. The impact of his project, titled Six Sigma Process Optimization of a CNC Milling Operation, resulted in an annual savings of \$15,216 for the company.

"We took a step-by-step model and took a process that was working too slowly and tried to find ways to get operating costs down by operating it faster," Smith said.

Matt Lee, who also graduated in May with an industrial engineering technology degree, applied classroom theory to fudge making by using statistical procedures to determine which fudge recipe was best.

*"The experience gained with these projects can go on resumes to show employers that students have applied what they've learned."*

Dr. Elke Howe

Department head,  
engineering technology

"I made just regular, fantasy fudge that's on the back of the marshmallow Kraft jar," Lee said.

Lee compared the original recipe to alternative ones made with changes in three areas: chocolate chip type, use of vanilla or mint, and amount of sugar.

Based on these varying factors, Lee cooked eight batches of fudge and fed them to classmates.

He is writing a paper on the results of the taste test and will reveal which recipe was liked the most.

Claudia Koch, assistant professor of industrial engineering technology, divided her students into pairs. Each pair was responsible for coming up with an original project.

"The idea was to dream up something, to come up with an idea, resources and a program for machines to do it," Koch said. "And then, make it saleable."

One pair of students created aluminum coasters featuring the Missouri Southern logo, while another group created boot holders used for drip-drying wet boots.

Once the projects are finished, Koch said students do a cost analysis to determine how their products fit into the market.

The students hope to eventually use the items as fundraisers.

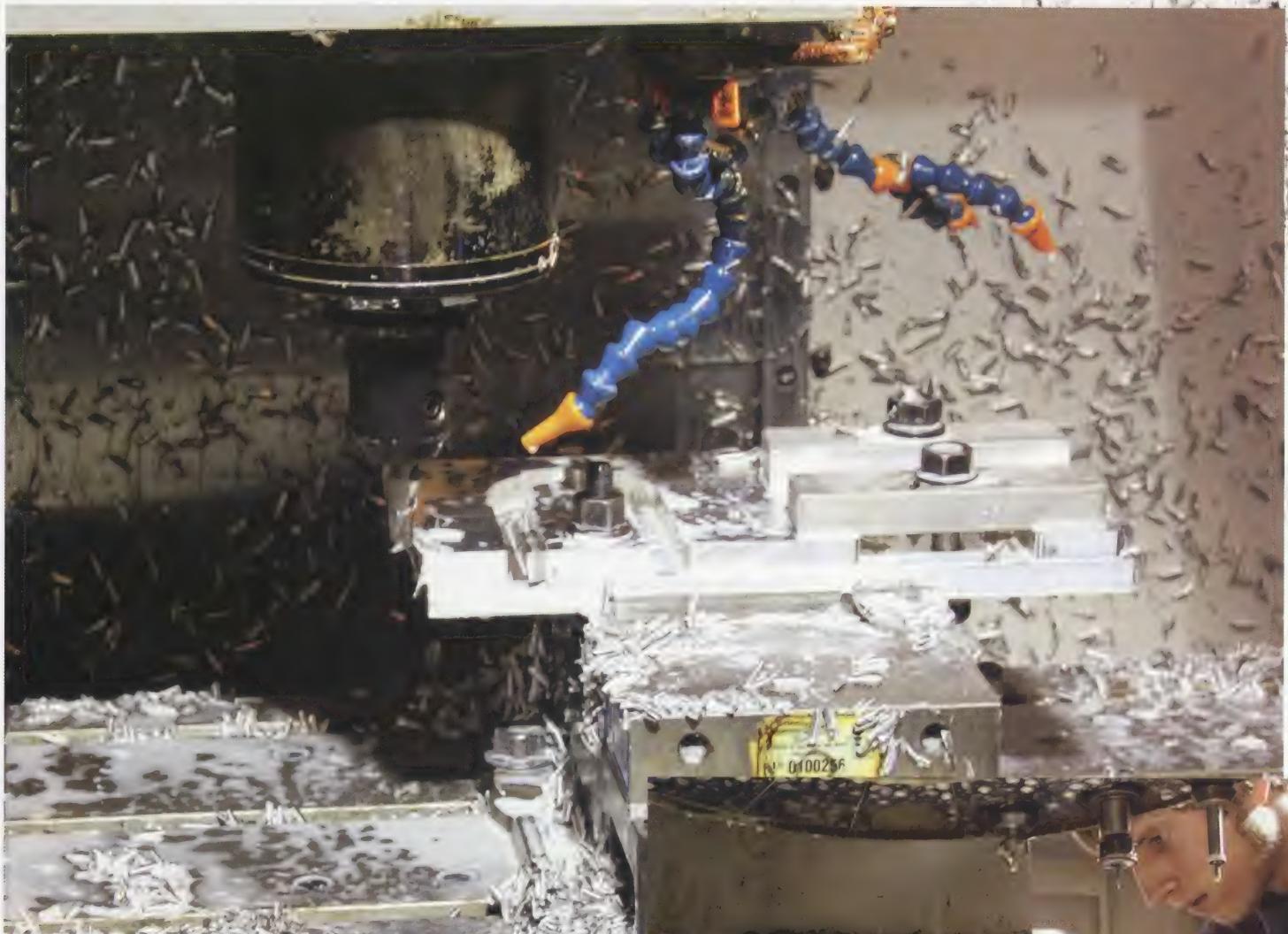
"They have an idea, a vision, and they make the vision come true," she said.

"Students have to figure it out like a real business."

Students in the program are grateful for the hands-on experience and real-world knowledge they gain.

"You get a true taste of what it's like to get a team together and have them going toward a common goal," said Shannon Rainey, senior industrial engineering technology major. "In the real world, you have to work with real people to reach goals." **C**

— Becky Husky, '10



Industrial engineering technology majors work hands-on with various projects. At left, senior John Ramm checks the settings on a computer numerical control machine. Lion coasters were made by IET students. Above, Robert Watson, sophomore, adjusts the settings on the CNC before milling a piece into a preprogrammed shape.

— Photos by Kristina Rutledge, '12

# On Patrol

## New driving simulator improves the training for law enforcement personnel.

**A**s three Missouri Southern Law Enforcement Training Academy students demonstrated the new driving simulator in the criminal justice department, it was obvious this was no ordinary training device.

The recently acquired PatrolSim IV Driving Simulator is a 1,200-pound, state-of-the-art training device that allows law enforcement professionals and trainees to practice high-speed pursuits, emergency responses, and traffic stops in a safe and controlled environment. The system features three high-resolution plasma screens for a 97-inch-long, 180-degree view combined with force-loaded steering for the look and feel of operating a real vehicle.

"There are actually sensors in the steering wheel that will jerk if they wreck the vehicle," said Jason Sharp, continuing education coordinator in the criminal justice department. "We can cause the tire to blow out, the engine to blow out, or the brakes — change it from day to night — anything that is thinkable, I can do on this machine."

From the instructor operating station, the facilitator controls the user's experience with the touch of a button.

"When I load a certain scenario, I have the option to select the type of vehicle to put them in," said Sharp. "A lot of the controls don't change, but the way the vehicle handles will. There is actually a difference between the Crown Victoria and the ambulance in the way they handle."

Users can also create custom scenarios, such as responding to a bank robbery in progress and all the events that will unfold, including the bank robber shooting at the user's vehicle. In this scenario, training will integrate the Fire Arm Training

System, an interactive way to help trainees decide when the use of force is necessary. When a suspect opens fire on the user's vehicle, the user can pick up the FATS gun — designed to emulate real firearms without ammunition — and role-play while learning how to control the situation.

Before the PatrolSim IV, students learned emergency driving training through classroom lectures and videos as well as in a vehicle at an obstacle course.

"It had to be done very controlled and at low speeds," Wayne Thomason, head of the criminal justice department, said of the obstacle course. "There was no way to do real training for high-speed emergency driving."

The simulator complements the academy's curriculum of driving a real vehicle.

The academy won't be the only area benefiting from the simulator.

Current law enforcement and EMT professionals will also use the device through the department's continuing education program. Thomason said emergency vehicle driving is one of the highest liabilities in law enforcement today, and Missouri Southern can assist professionals in keeping their skills sharp.

"There is a serious lack of emergency vehicle operation courses in this part of the state. The only other EVOC range in Missouri is at the Highway Patrol Training Center in Jefferson City," said Thomason.

The \$135,000 cost is proving to be worth the investment among department staff, given all the capabilities and training opportunities the simulator provides. Thomason summarized the most important feature of the new technology.

"This type of training will save officers' lives," he said. **C**

— Beth Wright, '11



### Simulator Features

- High-resolution graphics on plasma display for realism.
- Practice critical decision-making skills in a risk-free environment.
- Comprehensive training with hundred's of POST Certified Scenarios consisting of traffic stops, pursuits, multiple vehicles, emergency responses, etc.
- Coordinated pursuit training scenarios via multiple networked simulators.
- Officers can practice vehicle-handling skills including pit maneuvers, J-turns and skid-pad training course.
- Act as the dispatcher.
- Control the training environment by changing the weather, the time of day and vehicle characteristics.

Source: Training Systems Group of MPRI, an L-3 Communications company

Chance Adam, who will complete the Missouri Southern Policy Academy in May 2011, tests his skills on the PatrolSim IV Driving Simulator this fall. The new device will help officers experience situations similar to those in an actual vehicle. — Photo by Andrew Pavlovic, '11



# Lion Tales

By Emily Mergen, '11

*"When you own your own business,  
you never really have a day off."*

Skip Hale, '76

*Missouri Southern State University alumnus and  
co-owner of Ol' Glory and Paradise Bay car washes in  
Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma*

## SKIP HALE

**Who:** Missouri Southern alumnus, marketing and management, 1976.

**What:** With John Starrett, Hale co-owns five car washes: Ol' Glory in Joplin, Missouri, & Frontenac, Kansas; and Paradise Bay in Tulsa, Oklahoma, & Kansas City and Columbus, Kansas.

**Hometown:** Columbus, Kansas

**How the business started:** Hale began in the convenience store business, which led to the car washes. He sold his last convenience store four years ago.

**Secret to Success:** Perseverance, because it depends on what you want to do with your own business, making a commitment to work hard and follow what you believe in. Also, accepting the fact you are not always going to succeed.

**Greatest Challenge:** When you own your own business, you never really have a day off. One needs to have employees you can depend on and who care about the business.

**Southern Memories:** Hale attended MSSU on a football scholarship, and some of his best friends are ones he met at Southern. He still believes in the Green and Gold and is active with the football Alumni Association. He is very grateful for what he has received and achieved at MSSU.

*Have an entrepreneurial tale to tell? Send Lion Tales information to [Alumni.Assoc@mssu.edu](mailto:Alumni.Assoc@mssu.edu) or call 417-659-LION.*



*Skip Hale, '76, takes time out of his busy schedule for a photo at Ol' Glory Carwash, near Zora Street and Range Line Road in Joplin, Missouri. — Photo by Andrew Pavlovic, '11*

# EXTREME artwork

Program gives opportunity to showcase mosaic art while helping others.

**A** career has pieced itself together to form a business that's carried Sharon Plummer, '76, to the top of her field and a guest appearance on ABC's "Extreme Makeover Home Edition."

"Chaos doesn't even come close to describing it," Plummer said of the episode, which aired in April 2010. "It was just so incredible, but it was just a fabulous experience."

Plummer creates mosaics and was commissioned by the show to donate a piece for a home near Houston, Texas, where more than 4,000 volunteers helped with the redo. The show needed a mosaic headboard for a girl's bedroom. Plummer and her crew created the mosaic in a friend's studio, which was close to the house.

"We essentially worked for 18 hours," Plummer said. "It was a long night. ... We thought, 'Oh my gosh, what have we gotten ourselves into?'"

That was just the beginning. After creating the piece and moving it into the house on Day Four, they had been up and working for about 36 hours. They decided to wait on the final installation until the next day at dawn.

"It was a lot of fun, and we were just totally exhausted when it was over," Plummer said.

Plummer was always an artistic child, who enjoyed arts and crafts and hands-on work. While attending Southern, she happened to take a pottery class with John Fowler.

"I just absolutely fell in love with pottery," Plummer said. "It was the only art class that I took, but I just loved that class. I really got a lot out of it."

If someone had asked her what she wanted to do while at Southern, she would have responded with an entirely different answer than pottery.

"I seriously considered becoming a veterinarian," Plummer said.



Artist Sharon Plummer, '76, works on a mosaic headboard for a Texas home being featured on "Extreme Makeover Home Edition." The headboard took 18 hours to complete.

She graduated with a bachelor's in biology and moved to Lincoln, Nebraska, to work as a veterinary assistant.

"I got a really good chance to use my biology training," Plummer said.

After a few years, she moved to Houston, Texas, to pursue her career. However, the pay was low, and she went through other job opportunities before receiving an MBA from the University of Houston. Exxon and Exxon Mobile recruited her, and she worked for the energy giant for 18 years.

Upon retiring, she renewed her love for pottery, but discovered a different art form while working on her first project, a backyard water fountain.

"We constructed a studio in my backyard and put in a second floor so I would have a studio space over our garage, and I had always planned on pursuing a career in pottery," Plummer said.

She decided to decorate her new installation in a giant mosaic piece, and a new business was formed. The mosaic business has been running strong for eight years. She has made commissioned work for corporations, in addition to the "Extreme Makeover Home Edition" episode.

A board member of the National Mosaic Art Association, she loves promoting mosaic art. Plummer is taking this year off, doing some smaller projects for herself and donating time to local parks.

Plummer's life took her on a varied career path, but she found a dream job in her backyard and through one art class at her alma mater.

"I have a very strong affiliation with Missouri Southern, and I'm very glad to have graduated from there," Plummer said. **C**

— Brett Hecksher, '11

## CLASSNOTES

1970 **Roger L. Pennel**, '70, is a professor of criminal justice at the University of Central Missouri.

1972 **Gary Nodler**, '72, Missouri state senator from Joplin, Missouri, was named Senator of the Year by the American Legion, Department of Missouri, in July 2010.

1974 **Alicia (Grossman) West**, '74, is a wellness coordinator at Mercy St. John's Regional Medical Center in Joplin, Missouri.

1975 **Scott Brothers**, '75, president of the Insurancenter in Joplin, Missouri, was installed as the 2010-11 president of the Missouri Association of Insurance Agents in July 2010.

1978 **Liz (Johnson) DeMerice**, '78, after a long career in television as a producer, is now a marketing and public relations consultant in Chicago, Illinois.

1980 **William Robertson**, '80, is teaching fourth grade after retiring from 23 years in the law enforcement career field.

1982 **Alan D. Munson**, '82, is a controller for Taylor Crane and Rigging Inc.

**Jeff Johnson**, '82, is a senior consultant for Deloitte & Touché LLP.

1983 **Gary Bradshaw**, '83, is director of the division of customer service for the Kansas Gas Service.

1986 **Shannon Spradling**, '86, is the director of finance and operations for the St. Louis Language Immersion Schools.

## FUTURELION

Melanie (Holt) Clevenger, '07 and Callie Clevenger welcomed Chloe Janelle into the world on June 22, 2010.

**Larry Goodall**, '86, is the corporate director of human resources for Superior Industries International.

1991 **Marca (Mashburn) Hayter**, '91, is a sixth grade teacher for the Willard, Missouri, R-2 School District.

1992 **Paula Bliesath**, '92, is a high school English and speech teacher.

1993 **Beverly Rodgers**, '93, received an M.A. from Ohio State University in 1995 and a Ph.D. from OSU in anthropology in 2000. She accepted a vice presidential position of academic and student affairs at Leech Lake Tribal College in Minnesota.

**Teresa Hagerman**, '93, is a professional hunter in Africa and was the first woman known to take an elephant with a bow and arrow.

1994 **Tim Burrell**, '94, is a technical sales representative for Houston Area of Chevron Phillips.

1995 **Chad Casey**, '95, recently completed his degree requirements from A.T. Still University for a doctorate in physical therapy. He has been practicing physical therapy for 11 years after earning his physical therapy degree from the University of Missouri-Columbia. He and his wife, Amanda, have three future Lions in Chaz, 8; Avery, 6; and Adrienne, 5.

1997 **Cynthia Jack**, '97, is a team manager for the Army Air Force Exchange and Services.

**Michelle (Vineyard) Smith**, '97, joined Beach Properties of Florida, Beach Rentals of Florida, as the corporate designer.

1999 **Nathan Camp**, '99, is the general manager of Quality Inn and Suites in Waco, Texas. The Waco hotel received the 2010 Choice Hotels Quality Inn of the Year Award, out of 864 properties in the nation.

**Donald R. Simon**, '99, was elected to the board of directors for KKFI 90.1 FM Kansas City Community Radio.

2001 **Stephana (Babbit) Bekebrede**, '01, is vice president and marketing director for Tri-Lakes Title & Escrow.

2003 **Matt Roush**, '03, is a credit analyst II for the Holly Corp. in Dallas.

**James Everett Maness**, '03, recently completed a two-year IT internship with Naval Supply Systems Command in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania. He is posted as the supply department head in the U.S. Navy at USS Ashland.

2004 **Kimberly Harper**, '04, published *White Man's Heaven: The Lynching and Expulsion of Blacks in the Southern Ozarks, 1894-1909*, a book that deals with interracial violence in the New South era.

2007 **Adam R. Hogan**, '07, graduated in May 2009 with a master's of science degree in educational administration and is a special education teacher in Webb City, Missouri, School District.

**Sheryl Hunter**, '07, is territory manager and mentor for Bausch and Lomb.

2009 **Ayodeji "Deji" Ogunsola**, '09, is working on Wall Street for the Black Rock Investment firm.

**Phillip Dowden**, '09 is the assistant director of athletic media relations at Abilene Christian University in Abilene Texas.

**Scott Van Thuong**, '09, is attending graduate school at the University of Oklahoma and working on a doctorate in mathematics and master's in computer science.

— Reports from MSSU Alumni Association office

Have something to share with your fellow alumni? Send us your information for the spring issue to [AlumniAssoc@mssu.edu](mailto:AlumniAssoc@mssu.edu) or call 417-659-LION.

## JOPLIN JUNIOR COLLEGE

**George Robert "Bob" Atkerson,**

March 13, 2010

**Dr. Jerry Lee Augspurger,**

April 3, 2010

**Kathleen Grace LeGrande,**

April 3, 2010

**Marilee Howell,**

July 8, 2010

**Billie S. Flournoy,**

August 7, 2010

## 1990s

**Michael Scott Frogge, '97,**

June 8, 2010

## 2000s

**David Bradley Reed, '05,**

July 3, 2010

**Kelli Baldwin, '07,**

September 26, 2010

**Gary W. Shelton,**

June 3, 2010

## FRIENDS OF MSSU

**Richard "Rocky" Barkley,**

April 7, 2010

**Marlene DeLaine Agan,**

April 1, 2010

**Gregory Allan Dalton,**

March 16, 2010

**Robert S. "Bob" Phillips**

April 3, 2010

**Jeffrey L. Garrison,**

June 2, 2010

## Missouri Southern remembers faculty and friends

**Dr. Melvyn (Mel) Mosher** died March 28, 2010, in Joplin, Missouri. He was born in Palo Alto, California, in 1940, to Kenneth and Ramona. He earned a bachelor's in chemistry from the University of Washington and both a master of science in organic chemistry and a Ph.D. in physical organic chemistry from the University of Idaho. He did a two year post-doctoral appointment at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

In 1969, he accepted a teaching position at Marshall University (Huntington, West Virginia). In 1974, he and his family moved to Joplin, when he took a half-time appointment as assistant director of the MSSC Regional Crime Laboratory and a half-time appointment as assistant professor of chemistry. In 1998, he moved to full-time teaching in the physical science department as professor of chemistry.

Throughout his teaching career, he has been active in outreach programs to local schools. Missouri Southern's ACS Student Affiliates have presented "Chemical Magic" shows to numerous local schools.

Mosher is survived by his wife, Donna, three sons, and five grandchildren.

**Ray W. Grace**, 91, Carthage, Missouri, died May 17, 2010.

Grace was born December 21, 1918, in Arcadia, Kansas, the son of Charles E. Grace and Martha E. (Moore) Grace. He attended public schools in Arcadia and was a graduate of Arcadia High School.

He married Myrl Morene Barnett on October 31, 1937, in Ft. Scott, Kansas. She preceded him in death on August 1, 2006. He served in the U.S. Army Air Corps during WWII with the 449th Bombardment Group, Dalhart, Texas.

Grace was the owner-operator of Ray Grace Oil Co., a member of the First

United Methodist Church, Carthage, and an avid hunter and owner of champion hunting and field trial dogs.

Grace served on the Missouri Southern Board of Regents from 1977-82.

Survivors include two granddaughters; four great-grandchildren; former son-in-law, Jerry (Nancy) Perry, Carthage, and their daughter, Andrea; a very special friend and caregiver, Jacqueline Cato, Carthage. He was preceded in death by his wife and a daughter, Billie Rae Perry.

**Betty M. Marty**, 81, Neosho, Missouri, died May 2, 2010. She was born March 2, 1929, in Berryville, Arkansas, to Jack and Marie (Allen) Flowers.

Marty was a lifelong Neosho-area resident and member of the First Christian Church. She did volunteer work and was active in Silver Follies, ABWA, Rebecca Lodge, Fortnightly Study Club and Friends of the Fish Hatchery. She participated in "Visions Unlimited," a cooking and interview show with MSSU television station, KGCS, and participated in the Miss Senior Southern Missouri Beauty Pageant. She especially enjoyed impersonating Minnie Pearl with the Silver Follies, and was proud to have been the first female broadcaster in Missouri. Marty was preceded in death by her husband, Neal. She is survived by a son, a daughter, three grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, two great-great-grandchildren, and a sister.

**Dr. William Russell Smith**, a longtime Carthage, Missouri, physician and surgeon, died July 27, 2010. Smith was born near Mount Ida, Arkansas, on April 7, 1912. His early years were spent in central Arkansas, where he graduated from Benton High School in 1926. He earned a doctor of medicine in 1933 from Washington

University Medical School, St. Louis. In 1937, he moved to Carthage, where he established and maintained a practice in general medicine and general surgery for 46 years. He married Betty Maxine Redmond in June 1939, and they were married for more than 62 years, before her death. He was a member of the Carthage Rotary Club and served on various boards, including the Missouri Southern International Piano Competition. He was active in many other local organizations and loved serving the Carthage community. Survivors include two sons, two daughters, three grandchildren and two step-grandchildren.

**James R. Spradling**, 74, died August 9, 2010, in Carthage, Missouri.

Spradling was born September 28, 1935, in Carthage. He was a 1953 graduate of Carthage High School and graduated with a juris doctorate from the University of Missouri in 1961. He married Sandra Shoultz on June 4, 1960, in Carthage.

Spradling started his law practice in Oklahoma, then moved to Carthage, where he joined the Frank Birkhead Law Firm, later opening his own firm in Carthage. He was a member of the Jasper County Bar Association, Missouri Bar Association, Oklahoma Bar Association, American Bar Association and Grace Episcopal Church, Carthage. Spradling was a past president of the Missouri Southern Foundation. He received the Outstanding Educator of America Award in 1971, and for his many years of giving to the city of Carthage, he was named Citizen of the Year in 2003.

Survivors include his wife and a daughter and son.

Memoriam listing and obituaries current as of October 15, 2010. Send additions for the next issue to [AlumniAssoc@mssu.edu](mailto:AlumniAssoc@mssu.edu) or call 417-659-LION.

# Dress the House

10 a.m. - Noon  
Saturday, April 16, 2011  
Ralph L. Gray Alumni Center

Save the date for an event to shower  
the Mansion with china, silver and  
cookware, while enjoying a fashion  
show with local celebrities.

For more information,  
call Lee Elliff Pound, '86,  
MSSU Alumni Director,  
at 417-625-9355.

